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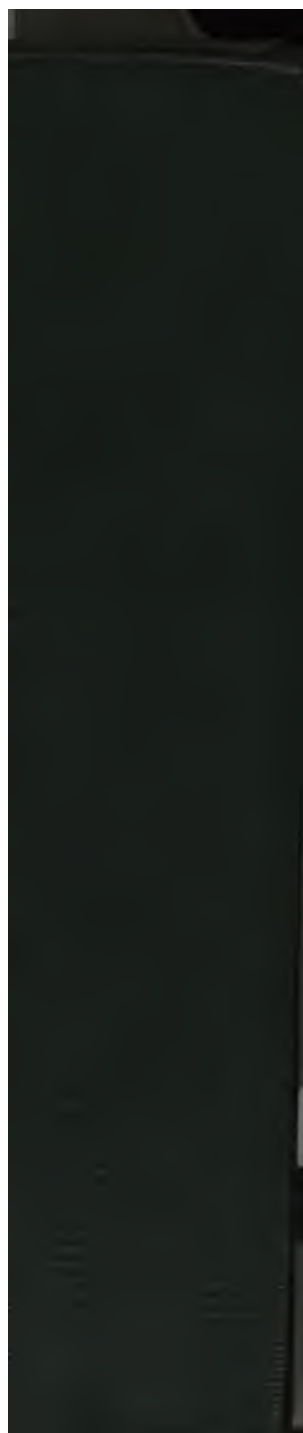
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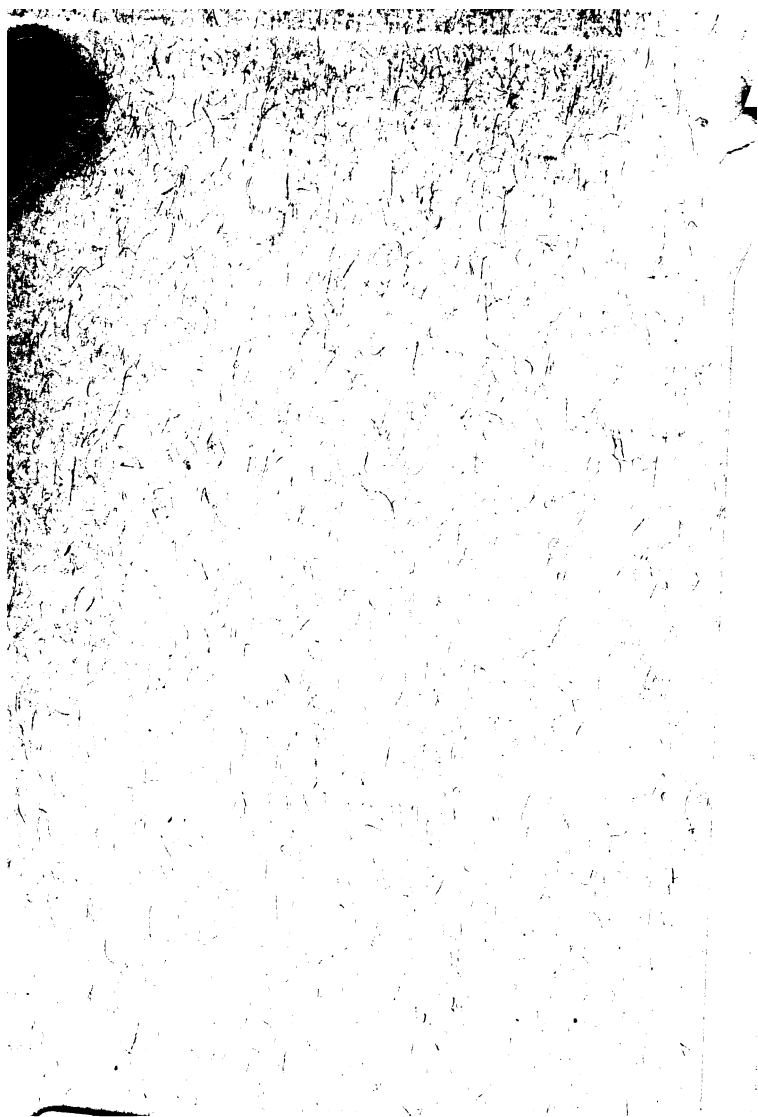
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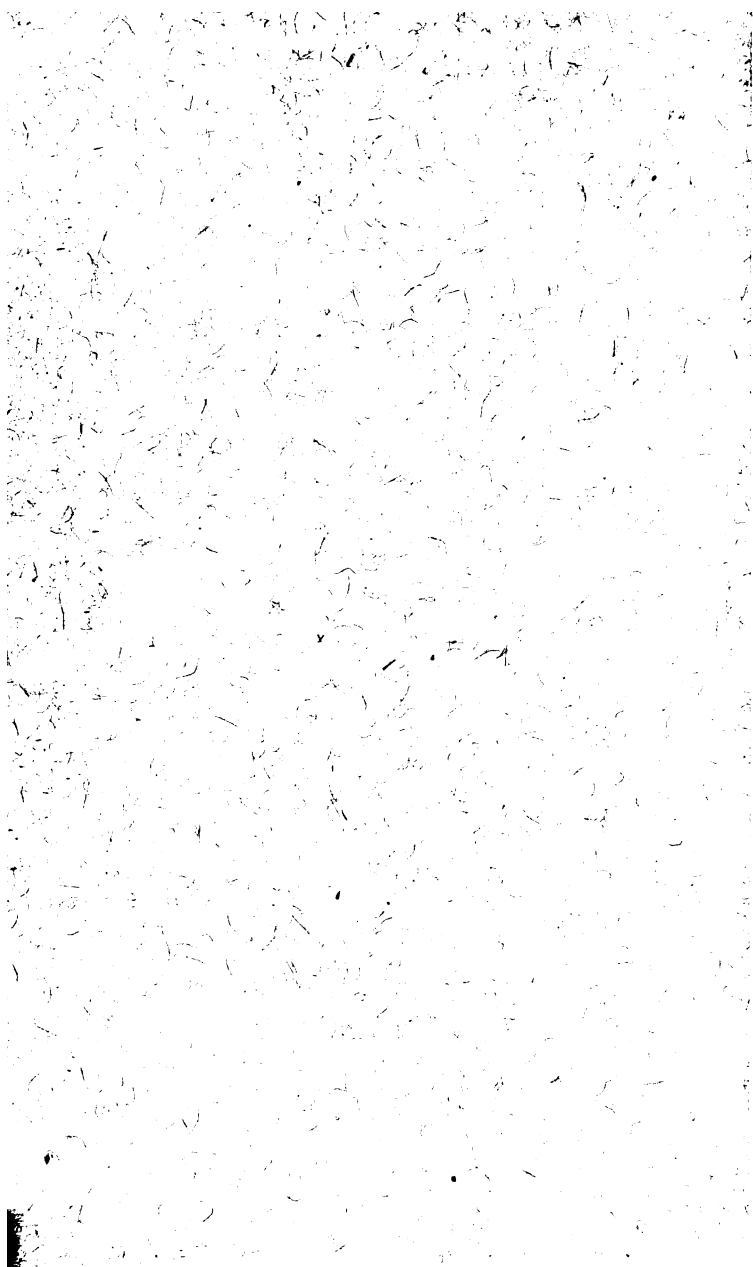
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STORIES
OF
SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDIES

BY
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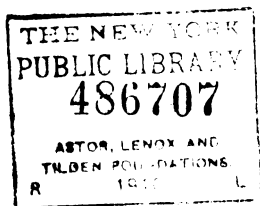
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PREFACE

IT seems almost a sacrilege to present merely the framework—the dry bones—of those world-famed masterpieces of diction and character drawing, Shakespeare's Plays; yet, for their right understanding and enjoyment, it is useful to disentangle the often intricate and confused substructures upon which they are reared, which (with one possible exception) were taken by the poet from earlier plays and transformed and transfigured by his genius.

To familiarise one's self with the main outlines of the plots or stories, and to refresh and clarify one's memory in regard to the characters and action, leaves one free to appreciate in full the beauty, charm, and force of the complete works, either when seen and heard on the stage, or read and re-read in the study.

To the student of literature, the theatre-goer, and all worshippers at the shrine of the master poet, we therefore offer in these pages bald but fairly complete outlines, which follow closely the action of the plays, and which for the sake of clearness and brevity have been left free from criticism, comment, and all save the scantiest quotations, although the temptation to insert whole passages proved almost irresistible.

While Charles and Mary Lamb, in their ad-

mirable classic, 'Tales from Shakespeare,' give the main thread of narrative of twenty of the thirty-seven plays, their purpose was not to supply a complete synopsis of the plots or characters. We therefore trust that, owing to its different scope, this new version will find a welcome in the world of books, and hopefully launch out the Comedies, which will soon be followed by the Tragedies and the Historical Plays, thus completing the list of Shakespeare's works for the stage.

H. A. GUERBER.

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STORIES

OF

SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDIES

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

ACT I. The rising curtain reveals a room in the royal palace at Athens, where King Theseus is conversing with Hippolyta, the lady who is to become his wife within the next few days. As their wedding is a cause of public rejoicing, the king bids one of his attendants go forth and invite the Athenian youths to prepare plays and other diversions to enliven the joyful occasion.

The servant has barely disappeared, when Egeus, an Athenian citizen, is ushered in. He is followed by his daughter and her two suitors, and has come here to ask the king to use his authority and enforce an old Athenian law, which decrees that any maiden, dwelling within the city walls, shall either marry the suitor her father chooses, forfeit her life, or become a votary of Diana.

Unable to deny the existence of such a law, Theseus talks to the young lady, whose name is Hermia, gravely advising her to obey her father. But Hermia argues that Lysander, the lover of her

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choice, is more than the equal of Demetrius, whom her father wishes her to marry, and that nothing save unreasoning prejudice prevents Egeus from approving of her choice.

On perceiving how obstinately this fair maiden clings to her lover, Theseus vainly tries to awe her by repeating the conditions of the law, and finally decides to grant her a brief respite, during which she can determine what she will do. But Demetrius urges her to favour his suit, demanding coolly that her lover Lysander relinquish all claims to her hand.

Not at all prepared to desert his lady-love thus, Lysander ironically advises Demetrius to be satisfied with the father's affections, without trying to secure those of the daughter as well, adding that he is quite aware that Demetrius has long been engaged to Helena, Hermia's bosom friend, and that such fickleness as he is displaying is disgraceful.

The king, who has already heard rumours to the same effect, bids Egeus and his candidate accompany him into a neighbouring apartment, where he wishes to have some private conversation with them, thus leaving Hermia and Lysander alone upon the scene. To comfort his beloved for her father's harshness, Lysander now gently reminds her that 'the course of true love never did run smooth,'¹ enumerating the many different ways in which lovers have been parted. He adds that as there is no prospect of evading the law, or of persuading her father to change his mind, Hermia had better run away from home, proceeding straight to his aunt's house, where he prom-

¹ All the quotations are taken from the Eversley Edition.

ises to meet and marry her immediately. As, once safely outside of the city wall, they will be out of reach of the cruel law, he further suggests that Hermia await him in a neighbouring forest, at a spot familiar to both, whence he can escort her to the agreed place of refuge.

Vowing by all that is sacred to meet her lover at this trysting-spot, Hermia is about to take leave of him, when her friend Helena rushes into the room, bitterly reproaching her for having made use of superior attractions to rob her of a lover. Helena is sure such treachery must be at work, because Demetrius has hitherto always shown her marked attentions.

In vain Hermia insists that she never sought to attract her friend's lover, Helena refuses to believe her, until the couple confide to her the plans they have just made, revealing exactly where they are going to meet,—a spot which Helena knows well, having often spent pleasant hours there with her friend.

When the lovers have gone, leaving her alone, Helena begins talking to herself, saying that she feels worthy of Demetrius' love, although not so fair as her friend. She is, besides, so anxious to see Demetrius again, to secure his approval, and earn his thanks, that she suddenly decides to reveal to him Hermia's and Lysander's romantic plan!

The second scene occurs in the shop of an Athenian joiner, who has summoned a number of his friends, so they can arrange for a fine play, which they intend to give in the presence of the bride and groom on their wedding night, in hopes of earning

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some reward. The roll being called, different parts are allotted for the drama of 'The most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby.' Bottom, the weaver,—the most talented actor in their midst, and very loquacious,—when given the part of Pyramus, instantly inquires whether he is to be lover or tyrant, boasting loudly he can play either part with marked success. Such is his conceit, that throughout this scene he keeps interrupting, offering to take every part in turn, for he is thoroughly convinced he alone can play it as it should be played.

In spite of all his interruptions, the rôle of Thisby is given to the bellows-mender, who is cautioned to speak in a very small voice, lest his sex be betrayed and the illusion dispelled. The lovers' parents are to be personated by sundry other artisans, and last of all the lion is assigned to a joiner, who zealously promises to roar so loudly that he will fill all hearts with terror. But, fearing lest they may forfeit the desired reward in case they frighten the ladies, the actors one and all implore him to moderate his ardour, suggesting finally that he follow Bottom's advice and 'roar like a nightingale!'

A little more conversation ensues in regard to the style of wigs and beards the actors shall wear, ere they disperse, reminding one another that they are to meet in the forest the next night to rehearse their play, as they do not want any one in town to have an inkling of what they are going to represent.

ACT II. The second act opens in the woods near Athens, at the very spot where Hermia and Lysander are to meet, and where the artisans have planned to

hold their rehearsal. At first, this moonlit glade seems entirely deserted, then, suddenly, appear from opposite sides, Puck (will-o'-the-wisp, or hobgoblin), messenger of Oberon, King of the Elves, and one of the fairies of Queen Titania's train. On meeting, these two fellow-sprites exchange greetings, and the fairy gleefully reports she has been wandering to and fro, hanging dewdrops in every cowslip's ear. Puck, in return, expresses pleasure at having met her, as he wishes to caution her to keep her mistress away from this spot, where his master has decided to hold his revels.

We next learn from their conversation that the fairy couple, once so tenderly united, are now on bad terms, Titania having refused to give her husband her Indian boy,—a refusal which has incensed Oberon. Whenever the King and Queen of the Fairies now meet, they quarrel so violently, that even the elves creep into acorn-cups and quake in fear.

The fairy next informs Puck in a playful manner, that she has heard of his fine doings, how he misleads night-wanderers, frightens young girls, and bewitches churns,—so Puck, laughing heartily at her insinuations, relates in pure glee a few of the mischievous pranks he has recently performed for the amusement of his king.

These two actors have barely finished talking, when Titania, Queen of the Fairies, enters from one side of the stage, followed by her suite, just as Oberon comes in from the other, escorted by his elves. Because they are still on bad terms, the fairy couple greet each other with cutting remarks,

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Titania accusing her husband of paying attention to other ladies, and Oberon taunting his wife with ungraciousness. Next, they charge one another with having come here from love for the royal couple, and Titania tearfully declares that unless her husband reform, great harm will ensue, as dissensions among fairies are sure to have fatal results.

Although Oberon replies he is ready to cease quarrelling as soon as Titania gives him the coveted boy, she goes off the stage, still denying his request, but vowing she will linger in this neighbourhood until the wedding festivities are over.

When the Queen of the Fairies has withdrawn into the thicket, followed by her train, Oberon summons Puck, for he has suddenly conceived a brilliant plan, whereby he hopes to get the best of his perverse mate. He explains to his little messenger how he once saw Cupid aim an arrow at a Vestal, and how that arrow, deviating from its course, fell upon a little flower, which immediately changed hue, becoming 'Love in Idleness' (a purple pansy). Now he knows that any flower, touched by Love's arrow, is thereafter gifted with special powers, and that the juice of this blossom, dropped upon the eyelids of a sleeper, will cause him to fall in love with the first person upon whom his glance rests on awakening. Oberon, therefore, bids Puck bring him this herb as soon as possible, and the sprite darts off, vowing he will soon be back, as he can 'put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes.'

Puck being gone, Oberon reveals he is going to drop this magic juice into the eyes of his slumber-

ing wife, taking his revenge for her refusal by making her fall violently in love with the first creature she sees, knowing full well that Titania, having once made herself ridiculous, will be only too glad to do whatever he wishes for the sake of escaping his ridicule.

As King of the Fairies, Oberon has, of course, the power to become invisible at will, so he vanishes when he perceives a couple coming in his direction. A moment after he has disappeared, Demetrius runs upon the stage, closely followed by the breathless Helena, who implores him to listen to her instead of pursuing her friend with unwelcome attentions.

Furious at not finding Hermia at the trysting-spot, and at not being able to vent his jealous rage by slaying Lysander, Demetrius impolitely bids his former sweetheart begone, declaring he no longer cares for her. Then, seeing Helena doesn't immediately obey, he taunts her with unmaidenliness, and is indignant to perceive that his jeers have no effect. This couple soon pass out of sight, the woman pleading, the man chiding, and every once in a while angrily threatening to abandon her in the dark.

Unseen, Oberon has witnessed this scene, and feels so sorry for Helena, that he vows before this couple again leaves his realm, the girl shall flee and the man sue for her love! He has barely finished saying this, when Puck reappears with the desired flower, of which Oberon gives part to his little messenger, instructing him to find a youth in Athenian garb, who is wandering in the forest in company with a lady. Puck is to press some of the juice

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upon the stranger's eyes, so he may undergo a change of heart, and return the ardent affections of the person he now scorns. The remainder of the magic herb Oberon intends to reserve for his own use in regard to his queen.

The next scene represents the bower of Titania, who lies amid flowers, surrounded by tiny attendants, to whom she distributes orders which they are to execute as soon as they have put her to sleep. This they do by singing in chorus a charming lullaby, wherein all noxious things are warned to keep away, and the nightingale summoned to charm their mistress's slumbers. So magical is the effect of this lullaby, that Titania soon sinks back sound asleep, and the fairies flit away, leaving only one of their number to mount guard over their beloved queen.

It is while Titania is thus peacefully sleeping, that Oberon steals upon the scene, and slyly drops the magic juice upon her eyelids, whispering, 'What thou seest when thou dost wake, do it for thy true-love take.' Of course, in speaking so, Oberon intends that the first object upon which his wife's glance rests shall be something utterly ridiculous.

Within sight of the spot where Titania lies wrapped in slumber, Lysander and Hermia arrive, almost exhausted by prolonged wanderings in the forest, where they have lost their way. Such is Hermia's fatigue, that Lysander tenderly implores her to lie down and rest, promising to remain close beside her. But, although Hermia consents to take the necessary repose, she suggests it will be proper for Lysander to withdraw to a short distance.



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QUEEN TITANIA AND BOTTOM

Bot. "I cry your Worship's mercy heartily.—I beseech your Worship's name,"
Cob. "Cobweb."

Midsummer-Night's Dream. Act 3, Scene 1.



Thus, when the two lovers fall asleep in the forest,—after exchanging sweet good-nights and promises to remain faithful to each other,—they lie some distance apart. Both are sound asleep when Puck appears, still looking for the man in Athenian garb, upon whose eyelids he is to drop the magic juice. On discovering Lysander, a short distance from Hermia, the sprite sagely concludes this must be the disdainful lover, and stealing up to him, gently drops the juice upon his eyes.

Puck has just gone to report success to Oberon, when Demetrius and Helena reappear, they, too, having lost their way in the forest and wandered about for hours. By this time, however, Demetrius is so exasperated by Helena's pursuit of him, that, notwithstanding her entreaties not to desert her in the darkness, he suddenly runs away. Too exhausted to follow him any longer, Helena glances timidly about her, and is equally surprised and delighted to behold Lysander sleeping near by.

Afraid to remain alone, and quite unconscious of Hermia's presence, Helena wonders whether Lysander may not be wounded or dead, and creeping quietly up to him, awakens him. Owing to the action of the magic herb, Lysander no sooner beholds Helena than he begins making violent love to her, swearing he has never cared for Hermia, whom Demetrius can now marry. This sounds so utterly unlike all she has hitherto known of him, that Helena cannot but think Lysander is making fun of her. She is, besides, indignant that the man she loves should thus be coolly awarded to her friend, and

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when Lysander persists in complimenting her, runs away, leaving him to follow her, for he now scorns the sleeping Hermia.

When both have vanished out of sight, an evil dream causes poor Hermia to start wildly from her slumbers and gaze about her in terror. No longer finding her lover near her rustic couch, she rises up in affright to try and find him.

ACT III. The third act opens in the woods where Titania is sleeping, so concealed by creepers and overhanging bushes, that her presence is unsuspected by the artisans who have come here to rehearse their play. Bottom, therefore, begins by remarking that if he is to play Pyramus and kill himself, the ladies in the audience will be sorely frightened; so he decides to state in the prologue that he is not Pyramus at all, but merely Bottom, the weaver, and that his death, being mere pretence, need inspire no alarm.

The man who is to play the lion, also fearing lest the ladies may dread such a wild animal even more than a mouse, decides to keep one-half of his human face constantly in view, and to reassure the audience by plainly stating he is the joiner and no lion!

These points being satisfactorily settled, two great difficulties still confront them, for they require moonshine to illumine one scene, and a wall to separate the lovers. By a brilliant flash of inspiration, however, one of the party suggests that an actor, provided with lantern and thorn-bush, personate Moon, while another, liberally smeared with lime and plaster, play the part of Wall, holding his fingers

wide apart so the lovers can talk between them as through the desired crack.

These points have just been decided, and the actors have barely withdrawn into the thicket,—from whence they intend to emerge in turn according to their cue,—when Puck, who is mounting guard over Titania, slyly remarks he is evidently going to witness a comical scene, and that, although no part has been officially awarded to him, he may yet figure in the play.

While he is watching for a good opportunity, Bottom steps forth, and liberally prompted by one of his companions, gives utterance to a melodramatic opening speech. 'Thisby,' his beloved, who is not well up in her part, makes stammering responses, and corrections are so frequent, that the whole speech is a ridiculous jumble. When it is over, Bottom withdraws into the thicket to await his next cue, and in the interval nods. Noticing this, Puck steals up behind the sleeper, and slyly draws over his head a quaint mask, which makes him appear like a man with the head of an ass! Still, Bottom's slumbers are so brief, that when the moment comes for him to reappear, he bursts out of the thicket.

At his strange appearance his comrades flee in terror, leaving him alone on the scene. But, while Bottom stands there amazed, Puck exclaims in an aside that he is going to lead the terrified actors a pretty dance through the forest. As he vanishes, Bottom tries to show indifference for his companions' unaccountable defection by singing a merry song in a blatant voice which soon awakens Titania. She

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no sooner beholds him, than, owing to the magic drug, she deems him an angel, and falls desperately in love with him!

Such is Titania's infatuation that, although Bottom's voice rivals that of the animal he personates, she implores him to sing again, as he has won her affections. Little moved by such declarations, Bottom is nevertheless pleased when she overwhelms him with compliments, offering four fairies to wait upon him and supply him with berries and honey, fanning him with butterfly wings to keep him cool. When, at the queen's call, four fairies appear and bow down before their new master, Bottom, delighted at the thought of being waited upon, inquires their names, making quaint comments upon 'Cobweb' and the rest.

Meantime, Titania gazes with rapture upon her new love, whom she bids the fairies lead off to a flowery bank, where they can wait upon him, and where she can deck his nice long ears with garlands of flowers and enjoy his company in peace.

The second scene is played in a different part of the forest, where Oberon stands, idly wondering whether his wife has awakened, and upon what object her eyes have first rested? It is just while he is expressing impatience for news, that Puck appears, to report with glee how madly his mistress has fallen in love with a rude mechanic, who has come into the forest with his companions to rehearse a play, and upon whose stupid shoulders Puck has slyly set the head of an ass. The little sprite next so humorously describes the flight of the actors at the

sight of this monster, that Oberon is delighted with the success of the trick they have played.

However, intense amusement doesn't make Oberon forget that he charged Puck with a second errand, for he now inquires whether the magic juice has been squeezed upon the eyelids of the Athenian youth? Puck satisfies him by relating just how he found the stranger, sleeping a short distance from his lady-love, and declares that on awakening the swain will surely fall in love with his fair companion.

The king and Puck are still whispering together when Hermia and Demetrius come upon the scene, whereat Oberon exclaims in surprise that here is the very Athenian he meant, but that, strange to relate, the woman he pursues is not the one with him before. Puck, however, declares that, although this woman is the same he saw in the forest, the man is an utter stranger to him!

Hoping to solve the mystery, the two plotters now listen to the conversation between Hermia and Demetrius, and are duly surprised when the lady chides her unwelcome lover for following her, and expresses suspicions that he may have done away with Lysander. So sure does Hermia feel that her beloved would never have forsaken her were he still alive, that her apprehensions are quieted only when Demetrius swears that he is not guilty of her lover's death. Then Hermia goes off in quest of Lysander, begging Demetrius not to follow her, and, although he ardently longs to do so, he desists, deeming further pursuit vain.

While Demetrius sinks down upon a green bank,

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where he falls asleep, Oberon reproaches Puck for having pressed the love-juice upon the eyes of the wrong man, and for having thus separated true lovers instead of uniting those who were estranged. He next bids the sprite make good his mistake by finding Helena, so Puck darts off, 'swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow,' while Oberon entertains himself by singing a gay little song about the magic herb with which he has just been playing such queer tricks, and which he now uses on Demetrius.

Just as Oberon finishes singing, Puck returns to announce that Helena is near at hand, closely followed by Lysander, the very man upon whose eyes he had dropped the magic juice, and who evidently has beheld her first instead of his own true love. Watching them from a distance, Puck wisely remarks, 'Lord, what fools these mortals be,' ere Oberon bids him be silent, for he knows the coming of this couple will rouse Demetrius.

Fairy King and attendant are invisible when Lysander and Helena enter, the man vainly vowing that he doesn't woo her in scorn as she fancies, but that his affections are deep and true. Helena, knowing how dearly he loved her friend a short time ago, rails at him for denying his affection for Hermia, and angrily refuses to listen when he urges that Demetrius loves and will soon marry that lady.

Their voices, thus raised in contention, awaken Demetrius, who, also under the herb spell, no sooner beholds Helena than he falls madly in love with her. His declaration to that effect seems pure mockery to his beloved, who cries out indignantly against

the youths for thus making sport of her for pleasure! But, utterly blinded by the love-juice, Lysander bids Demetrius go in quest of Hermia, leaving Helena free to marry him, an arrangement which seems nothing short of treachery to Helena.

Meantime Hermia, still seeking Lysander, suddenly comes upon the trio, and besides being disowned by her lover, is accused by Helena of making fun of her, although they were once so intimate that they exchanged confidences in this very spot. Not only do Helena and Hermia misunderstand each other sorely, but the two men, both anxious to secure Helena, manage to offend both ladies, ere they turn upon each other in wrath, and propose to fight.

At this juncture, Oberon secretly directs Puck to conceal the duellists from one another by a fog, mimicking their voices so as to separate them, and leading them a merry dance through the forest. Mischief such as this is so congenial to Puck's nature, that he promptly disappears, and, in the midst of suddenly rising fog and darkness, lures the rivals from place to place, so eager are they to meet each other and fight the duel for which they pine. Besides, Oberon has directed that this delusion be kept up until both fall down exhausted, when a magic herb being again pressed on Lysander's eyes, he will return to his allegiance to Hermia.

Favoured by fog and darkness, and led by Puck, the quarrelling lovers fail to meet, but are, instead, finally led back separately to the spot from whence they started. But both are so utterly exhausted by

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their efforts to overtake one another and revenge the insults Puck has been calling out in their respective voices, that they sink down and fall asleep.

The two girls, who have also lost their way in the forest, and have been lured hither by fairy means, next appear and drop down on the grass overcome by fatigue. Quite unconscious of each other's presence, the four lovers thus lie in different parts of the stage, sound asleep, when Puck, stealing forward, slyly squeezes magic juice on Lysander's eyes, arranging this time that he atone for Hermia's distress by again lavishing all his love upon her.

ACT IV. The fourth act opens in Titania's flowery bower, while she is trying to induce Bottom to lie down on a mossy bed, kissing his long hairy ears, and decking him out in garlands of flowers. Bottom, who has taken very kindly to petting, and to the ministrations of the fairies, soon drops off asleep, and while he and the queen are dozing, Puck and Oberon come upon the scene. The latter relates how, her conscience troubling her, the Fairy Queen offered to make friends with him and relinquished the Indian boy in regard to whose possession the quarrel arose. Delighted at having obtained what he wants, Oberon now wishes to undo his mischievous spell, and secretly bids Puck remove the disguising head from Bottom's shoulders, arranging that on wakening he shall fancy he has been the victim of a queer dream.

Then Oberon gently touches his sleeping wife's eyelids, whispering softly, 'Be thou as thou wast wont to be; see as thou wast wont to see,' a spell

which proves so effective that when Titania rouses a few moments later, she exclaims she has been the victim of a strange dream, wherein she actually fancied she had fallen in love with an ass! When Oberon gravely points out to her the queer shape lying beside her, Titania is utterly at a loss to imagine how any one could feel affection for so grotesque a creature.

The reconciliation between the King and Queen of the Fairies being now complete, they celebrate it by treading a mystic dance, while magic music is played. Next they prepare to go off together to the king's house to bless his marriage, as well as the nuptials of the four lovers, which are to take place at the same time. But, it is only when Puck calls out a reminder that the lark is just beginning to sing, and that fairies, being creatures of the night, should vanish, that the King and Queen of the Fairies cease dancing and disappear.

They have no sooner gone, attended by Puck, than a gay blast of horns awakens the forest echoes, and a hunting party appears. It is led by Theseus with his betrothed, and Egeus is one of the lords in their train. To his amazement he suddenly perceives his daughter Hermia, sleeping out in the forest, and soon after discovers, a short distance away from her, Lysander, the lover whom she has chosen, Helena, her bosom friend, and Demetrius, the man whom he is so anxious to call son-in-law! While Egeus expresses surprise at beholding the four young people in this place, Theseus suggests that having risen early to fulfil May rites, they

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have evidently been overtaken by fatigue. He inquires also whether this is not the day upon which Hermia is to make known her choice, and orders the sleepers awakened by a blast of the horns.

At the merry notes of the huntsmen, the sleepers awaken, startled and frightened, only to be greeted by a request from Theseus to be told how it happens that rival lovers should be lying in the forest close together, in such peace and amity? Confused by sleep, but no longer under an adverse spell, Lysander can give no other explanation save that he came hither with Hermia to escape the Athenian law. This statement enrages Egeus, who urges Demetrius to claim his bride; but, this suitor no longer wishes to do so, Oberon's magic having made him return to his former allegiance to Helena, and hence cease to covet the hand of her friend.

As no man can be forced to marry a maiden if he doesn't wish to do so, Theseus suggests that Egeus allow his daughter to be united to Lysander at the same time as Demetrius is wedded to Helena. He adds that these two marriages can take place at the same time as his own, and goes away with his betrothed and train, bidding the lovers follow them later to the temple.

After vainly trying to reach a clear understanding of what has befallen them in the course of this mysterious night, the four lovers conclude they must have been victims of some queer dreams, and hasten off to the temple, where their wedding is to be celebrated and their happiness made secure.

They have barely gone out of sight when the

sleeping Bottom awakens,—no longer wearing an ass's head, but still labouring under a vague delusion that he ought to answer a cue. Little does he suspect how long his slumbers have lasted, and fancies the experiences of the night are merely the effects of some strange dream, which he proposes to put into poetry, and to recite at the end of his play. Then, after a vain search for his companions, Bottom decides to return home to find out what has become of them.

The next scene is played at Athens, in the joiner's house, where the various actors bewail the absence of Bottom, their star, without whom their play cannot take place. Suddenly one of the number sees him coming out of the temple, closely followed by three bridal couples. As their companion will now be in time for the play, the actors begin to rejoice over the largess they expect, and crowding around Bottom as soon as he appears, inquire where he has been and what he has done? These are questions which Bottom prefers not to answer, so he directs them to make all necessary preparations, for their play is to be given in the palace that very evening, notwithstanding the mysterious things which have happened to him, concerning which he drops sundry hints.

ACT V. The fifth act opens in the palace of Theseus at Athens, when he and his new wife enter the apartment, commenting upon the weird tales told by the four lovers, who have also just been united at the altar, and who are going to view the gay revels. Theseus, however, declares that, although

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their adventures in the forest on Midsummer Night's Eve sound somewhat extraordinary, there are many spirits abroad at that time, which delight in tricking mankind.

The royal bridal couple are next joined by the two other pairs, and all agree to view the sports promised, Theseus selecting from among the suggested diversions, 'Pyramus and Thisby,' which is to be given by artisans. This decision reached, the actors are summoned, and the play opens with a prologue, wherein due apologies are made for deficiencies, and an explanation given in regard to the expedients to which the actors have had to resort to represent both Moon and Wall.

This introduction finished, the actual play begins. Pyramus and Thisbe¹ talking gravely and grandiloquently through the crack in the wall, and agreeing to meet near a neighbouring tomb that very evening. The second scene represents this trysting-place, lighted by the Moon's lantern, where Thisbe, waiting for her lover, is suddenly driven away by the approach of the lion. A few moments after the departure of this beast,—which has considerably refrained from frightening the spectators by showing a generous half of a human face,—Pyramus comes upon the scene, and perceiving Thisbe's veil, which has been mangled by the beast of prey, rashly concludes his beloved is no more. In his frantic grief, Pyramus stabs himself. He is just breathing his last when Thisbe reappears upon the scene, and after duly lamenting his death, draws the dagger

¹ See Guerber's 'Myths of Greece and Rome.'

from her lover's breast and plunges it in her own. Frightened by all it sees and hears, the poor Moon now vanishes, exclaiming dramatically, 'Moon, take thy flight!'

This play,—which is interrupted time and again by ludicrous comments from the spectators,—having come to an end, Theseus proposes a dance to conclude the evening's entertainment, and the company have barely left for the ballroom, when Puck darts upon the scene, declaring the moment has come for his midnight spells, as he has been sent here to prepare for the coming of the fairies.

When he has swept behind the door, Oberon and Titania enter, escorted by their fairy train. After singing, dancing, and blessing the bridal chambers so as to secure health, happiness, and long life for the three couples who have been united that day, the fairies disappear, while Puck recites the epilogue, slyly hinting that, should the spectators wonder at all that has occurred, they may find the solution of the problem by remembering that mortals often have mad fancies on Midsummer Night's Eve.

THE TEMPEST

ACT I. When the curtain rises we behold a vessel drifting helplessly in a hurricane, in spite of the efforts of a half-drunken crew. The passengers, suddenly appearing on the deck, are roughly bidden keep out of the way, as their presence and inquiries only add to the confusion. These passengers, on their way home from Tunis where they went to witness the marriage of the King of Naples' only daughter, are the King of Naples himself, with his son and brother, accompanied by the usurping Duke of Milan, and a wise old councillor, who indignantly vows these sailors are too impudent to die natural deaths, and will yet live to be hanged!

The excitement on board reaches its highest pitch when the noise of splintering timbers suddenly rises above the storm, and all become intent upon their own salvation, even the old councillor,—the calmest present,—expressing a fervent desire to be safe on dry land.

The second scene is played on the island toward which this ship is drifting, the rising curtain revealing the magician Prospero, whose dark arts have called up this frightful storm. Suspecting this, his beautiful daughter, Miranda, rushes forward, imploring him to abate the tempest, using his super-

natural powers only to save those she has seen in imminent peril. Her generous emotion touches the magician, who reassures her by stating that bad as things appear, neither ship nor any member of its crew shall perish. Having thus quieted her worst apprehensions, Prospero inquires whether she has any recollection of the manner in which they two once reached this island? In reply, Miranda says she remembers nothing, save that women were about her in early childhood, although since then no such human beings have met her eye.

To her innocent surprise she now learns for the first time, that her father, the rightful Duke of Milan, being far too absorbed in the study of magic to realize all that was going on about him, was supplanted by his own brother, Antonio, helped by his ally the King of Naples. To dispose of the rightful duke and of his infant daughter, without actually staining their hands in their blood, these cruel men cast them adrift in a leaky vessel, expecting, of course, that they would soon perish. It happened, however, that, learning these intentions, an old councillor secretly placed on board all passengers could need, including rich garments and a few of Prospero's best beloved books of magic.

Thus, instead of perishing, father and daughter drifted to this island,—a little paradise,—where they have now dwelt more than twelve years; time employed by Prospero in perfecting himself in magic, until he can now do almost anything he pleases. He has also carefully educated his daughter Miranda, until she is an ornament to her sex, although

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he has hitherto kept her ignorant of her origin, and of his dealings with sundry spirits, whom she has never yet seen.

Requiring the aid of one of these assistants, Prospero sends Miranda to sleep by a few passes, ere he summons Ariel, a dainty spirit of the air, who at his command has stirred up this frightful storm. The tempest has been devised to bring to the island both the false brother and his ally, magic having revealed the fact that they are now at sea. Called upon to report what he has done, Ariel vividly describes the wild hurricane, and the apparent wreck of the vessel, which in reality, is riding safely at anchor in a bay, its crew being wrapped in deep slumber. He also states that all the noble passengers have reached land in safety, Prince Ferdinand having been separated from the rest under such perilous circumstances, that his companions deem him lost.

Highly pleased with Ariel's report, Prospero warmly praises him, sternly refusing, however, to grant him the freedom from bondage he craves, until other orders have been executed. When Ariel ventures to grumble against this decree, Prospero reminds him how he and his fellow-creatures,—all the good spirits on the island,—were once under a far more cruel rule; for, having refused to obey the witch who took possession of their realm, one and all had been subject to frightful tortures, Ariel, for instance, being thrust into a cloven pine, where he had remained a groaning, suffering prisoner, until freed by Prospero's magic arts.

As all this is perfectly true, Ariel humbly prom-

ises to earn his freedom by implicit obedience, departing promptly when Prospero bids him assume the guise of a sea-nymph, invisible to all save his master. It is while Ariel is executing this command that Miranda rouses from her magic sleep, and is invited by Prospero to enter the cave they inhabit, to ascertain whether Caliban, their slave, has fulfilled his tasks. The mere mention of Caliban,—a hideous monster, son of the wicked witch,—causes Miranda to shudder, and she shrinks back in terror when he appears at his master's call, cursing and complaining, for he is so stupid and cross-grained that such is the only use he cares to make of the gift of speech cultivated by Prospero. Left to his own devices this monster thinks and does nothing but evil, so the magician, taking advantage of his stupidity, keeps him in subjection by allowing invisible spirits to pinch and tease him whenever he attempts to rebel.

Caliban's standing grievance is that Prospero has robbed him of the island, where he once ruled at will, so he reviles his master until gravely reminded how kindly he was treated at first, and how patiently taught. It was, in fact, only when his vile instincts prompted him to injure Miranda, that Prospero reduced him to a state of slavery, and condemned him to carry heavy loads of firewood to the cave.

The monster has scarcely gone in quest of more fuel, in obedience to Prospero's command, when Ariel appears in the guise of a nymph, ready to execute his master's orders. He is then directed to guide the shipwrecked Prince Ferdinand to the

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magician's cave, and darting away, soon discovers this youth on the shore, bitterly mourning the loss of father and friends, for he is convinced he alone has escaped a watery grave.

Ferdinand is roused from an abstraction of grief by weird music, the invisible Ariel singing above his head a dainty song, which is to serve as lure to guide him to Prospero's cave. But, when the tricky sprite begins to chant that the royal corpse lies beneath the waves, where his eyes have turned to pearls, and everything about him has suffered 'a sea-change into something rich and strange,' the prince takes it as a sad confirmation of his fear that his father has ceased to exist.

Following the mysterious, invisible singer, Ferdinand gradually draws near the spot where Prospero and Miranda are standing. While the father expects him, and is already familiar with the aspect of mankind, the daughter seems lost in wonder at the sight of so strange a being, never having seen any one since she was three years old, save her old father, or the hideous Caliban.

When Miranda expresses innocent admiration at the sight of the youthful newcomer, her father kindly assures her this is no spirit, as she supposes, but merely a shipwrecked prince, vainly seeking his companions, and mourning a father's loss. Tender-hearted Miranda is so touched by Ferdinand's sorrow, that Prospero perceives with joy she will readily fall in love with the prince, whom he has brought here for that very purpose.

Still led by the ærial music, Ferdinand finally

reaches the spot where father and daughter await him, and is so charmed by the young lady's beauty, and so touched by her compassionate glances, that he at first mistakes her for some goddess. On learning, however, that she, too, is a mere mortal, Ferdinand eagerly inquires whether she is still free to dispose of her hand, and is overjoyed when Miranda innocently replies that she is still a maid. Equally surprised and delighted to discover that so beautiful a vision speaks his own language,—the ship having drifted so long and so far he fancied he must have landed on some foreign shore,—the prince indulges in lover-like raptures.

In reply to Prospero's questions, he then courteously explains who he is, and how he and his companions,—whom he duly names,—happened to be at sea when overtaken by the storm. Every word he utters helps to convince the magician that his spells have worked just as he planned, and he is so delighted to think how cleverly Ariel carried out his orders, that he softly vows the sprite shall soon be free.

Meantime, the prince and Miranda, both young and innocent, have been exchanging admiring glances, every one of which has so increased Ferdinand's love for this beautiful island maiden, that he impetuously proposes to make her Queen of Naples.

Realizing that the young people will prize each other's affections more if difficulties are placed in their way, Prospero now rudely interrupts their conversation, declaring he knows Ferdinand has come

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to the island as a spy, and threatening in punishment to chain him fast and give him nothing but seawater to drink! The prince, who is no coward, boldly tries to defend himself by drawing his sword, but the magician, by one word, disarms and makes him helpless.

The wrath Prospero now simulates seems so alarming, that Miranda, clinging passionately to him, pleads so eloquently in behalf of the stranger, that her father finally pretends to relent. He, therefore, announces that the prince's punishment shall be commuted to slavery, a decree which no longer seems harsh to Ferdinand, since it will enable him to see Miranda. This scene closes while Miranda is sweetly comforting and encouraging poor Ferdinand, and while Prospero is whispering new orders to Ariel, encouraging him to do his best with the assurance that he shall soon be 'free as mountain winds.'

ACT II. The second act opens upon a remote part of the beach, where we behold the disconsolate group of passengers. The good old councillor, Gonzalo,—who supplied Prospero and Miranda with all things necessary for their journey,—is congratulating himself and his companions upon their narrow escape, his remarks being received rather ungraciously by some of the party; the poor King of Naples, for instance, finding it hard for a father to feel grateful for being saved, when his only son and heir has perished!

While the king plunges back into mournful reflections, his companions comment upon the island,



MIRANDA'S INTERCESSION

H. Hoffmann

Mira. "If by your art, my dearest father, you have
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them."

The Tempest. Act 1, Scene 2.

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whose beauty delights them, wondering on what shores the storm can have driven them? They are, besides, greatly amazed to find not only themselves, but even their garments, none the worse for all they have been through. It is only when some time has elapsed that they again try to rouse the king from his state of grief and despondency, by suggesting that the prince, too, may have landed safely, and that hence he must not despair.

The balmy air of the island,—where the councillor proposes to found an Utopia,—added to the mysterious music of Ariel, which now falls upon their ears, has such a peculiar drowsy effect, that all save two soon fall sound asleep. These wakeful men are the usurping Duke of Milan, Antonio, and his match in baseness, Sebastian, brother of the King of Naples. While the others sleep, these two timorously wonder whether the trials they have just undergone may not have been sent in punishment for their cruel treatment of Prospero and of his daughter. They are, however, so eager for new crimes, that they plan to murder the king, for the prince being safely out of the way, only one life now lies between them and the throne of Naples, which they covet.

They are just creeping toward the sleeping monarch to execute their wicked plan, when Ariel mysteriously rouses the councillor, who, at sight of their pale faces and fierce glances, shrewdly suspects their villainous intentions. He manages, however, to conceal his suspicions, and listens to the conspirators' description of strange sounds that startled them,

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and made him give the alarm to his companions, who are now all wide awake.

Sleep being banished for the present, the shipwrecked noblemen compassionately volunteer to aid the king in searching for traces of his son, and Ariel, satisfied that no further mischief is brewing for the present, flits off to report progress to Prospero.

In the next scene, we behold Caliban, staggering along under a heavy load of firewood, muttering curses against Prospero and his petty persecutions. While thus giving vent to his anger and rebellion, Caliban suddenly catches sight of the Court Jester (Trinculo), whose cap, bells, and motley attire fill him with such unreasoning terror, that he falls down flat on the ground, hoping his cloak will effectually conceal him.


The Jester,—who has not perceived Caliban,—now comes quickly forward, expressing intense fear lest another storm be imminent, for the noise of thunder is again heard in the air. Glancing wildly about him for shelter from the tempest, the Jester suddenly perceives Caliban's cloak, and thinking it covers some islander slain by a thunderbolt, creeps quickly under it, evidently congratulating himself upon the fact that lightning seldom strikes twice in the same spot, and muttering that 'misery acquaints a man with strange bed-fellows!'

True to his nature, the Jester no sooner discovers that the man beneath whose cloak he has just taken refuge is still alive, than he begins playing mischievous pranks, poking, punching, and pinching him in fun. Believing himself once more a prey to

his wonted tormentors, Caliban squirms and groans, until he thus attracts the attention of the ship's butler, who now comes upon the scene. Having drifted ashore on a cask of liquor, this man has been comforting himself ever since landing with so many potations that they have attuned his heart to mirth. His rollicking song,—with frequent pauses to draw comfort from the bottle he carries,—is now interrupted by Caliban's wild entreaty to be spared.

The Butler, who has no evil intentions, is so surprised, that he raises the cloak sufficiently to discover Caliban's face. To reassure the strange, trembling creature before him, the Butler gives him a generous drink, which agreeably tickles the monster's palate. It is while Caliban is drinking deeply that his benefactor, who has discovered a second pair of feet sticking out from beneath the cloak, is overjoyed to find that they belong to his friend and fellow-sufferer, the Jester. They two compare notes in regard to their marvellous escape, until interrupted by Caliban, whose small wits are so sorely affected by the liquor he has drunk, that he implicitly believes the Butler when he audaciously states he is the man in the moon.

Convinced that all the rest of his companions have perished in the storm, the Butler announces in lordly fashion that he intends to be king of this island; whereupon Caliban, fawningly eager to serve the man who can supply him with such draughts as he has just quaffed, volunteers to wait upon him instead of Prospero, who, he drunkenly chants, can 'get a new man.'



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ACT III. The third act reveals Ferdinand carrying heavy logs and painfully piling them up, Prospero having condemned him to handle a thousand before sunset. While labouring manfully at this hard and unaccustomed task, Ferdinand declares that the thought of Miranda sweetens all his trials, and that her gentleness and compassion offer a strange and pleasing contrast to her father's undue severity. It is while he is thus commenting upon his strange situation, that Miranda steals toward him, thinking her father is still intent upon his books and little suspecting that he is following her, and sees and hears all that transpires. Her tender heart is so wrung at the sight of her lover's evident exhaustion, that she implores him to sit down and rest, even offering to carry logs in his stead, a proposal which the prince, of course, gallantly refuses to accept. Instead, he manfully tries to comfort her, assuring her that no trial will prove unbearable as long as she stands by to pity and encourage him.

The eavesdropping Prospero is highly delighted with all this, as he wishes these young people to fall in love with each other; he therefore smiles indulgently when his daughter disobeys him, by revealing to the prince her name. No sooner does Ferdinand hear it, than, punning upon its meaning, he assures her she is indeed the most admirable of women, adding that he has never beheld any member of her sex who could compare with her in beauty or grace.

Having no recollection of any female face save her own, Miranda is greatly elated by this compli-


ment, and repays Ferdinand's courtesy by assuring him that, although she has never seen any gentleman save her father, she feels certain she will always prefer him to every one else. In return for this artless declaration, Ferdinand informs his lady-love that he is a prince, and probably a king, but that, notwithstanding his exalted rank, he would gladly remain a mere slave for her sweet sake.

It is while Prospero looks on, well pleased, that this young couple pledge faith, promising to live and die single, unless they can marry one another. Then they pass slowly off the stage, after a tender farewell, while Prospero benevolently watches them out of sight, before again having recourse to his magic books, as there still remains much work for him to do.

A new change of scene again transfers us to the part of the island where the Butler, the Jester, and Caliban sit around a winecask, pledging each other again and again. Owing to deep drinking, Caliban has become so maudlin that he offers to lick the Butler's shoes, and positively grovels at his feet.

While these three are revelling and boasting, Ariel joins them unseen, just in time to overhear Caliban confess he is subject to a magician, who has basely robbed him of this island. When Ariel exclaims aloud, 'Thou liest!' a quarrel arises among the drinkers, both Caliban and the Butler hotly accusing the Jester of uttering these offensive words, although he angrily denies doing anything of the sort.

This quarrel over, Caliban proposes that the Butler dispose of Prospero by driving a nail through




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his head, and then assume the sovereignty of the island, only to be again interrupted by scornful remarks from the invisible Ariel. As these are once more attributed to the Jester, he is beaten by his rough companions, ere they resume the discussion of their evil plans.

They finally settle that Caliban shall lead his companions to the cave,—where the sorcerer always indulges in an afternoon nap,—and that, after murdering Prospero and disposing safely of his magic books, the Butler shall marry Miranda and share with her the sovereignty of the island, of which the Jester and Caliban are to be viceroys.

Ariel, having overheard these plans, watches the conspirators set out to put them into execution, and then flits rapidly on ahead to warn Prospero of their coming, playing a gay little tune, which mystifies both Butler and Jester, but which Caliban recognises as music he has often heard before.

In the meantime, the noblemen have been wandering sadly around the island, vainly seeking traces of Ferdinand. They have just abandoned the quest in despair, and Sebastian and Antonio are secretly renewing their vile plots to murder the mourning King of Naples. They are about to attack him, when Prospero,—who knows all, and who has purposely lured them to this spot,—creates a diversion by having a magnificent banquet served by airy spirits. It disappears again, however, before they can touch it, when Ariel, in the guise of a Harpy, flaps his wings above the table. But, before again vanishing into 'thin air,' Ariel solemnly denounces the King



of Naples, his brother, and the false Duke of Milan, as men of sin, declaring it is in punishment for their crime toward Prospero and Miranda that they have recently suffered shipwreck.

The King of Naples, who long ago repented his share in this crime, now sadly acknowledges he has indeed met just retribution in the loss of his son, while the two other sinners, utterly unrepentant and bent upon new crimes, set out in a rage to pursue the Harpy, whose clever acting again wins Prospero's praise. While the noblemen wonder whether they have not been victims of some new delusion, and the councillor comments on the different ways in which the king, his kinsman, and ally, have received this reproof, Prospero hastens back to the cave, where the prince and his daughter await him.

ACT IV. The fourth act opens before the cave, just as the magician is courteously apologising to Ferdinand for imposing such hard tasks upon him, explaining that he has done so merely to test the strength of his affection for Miranda. Then Prospero promises to bestow his daughter's hand upon the young prince, warning him, however, that ere he can claim her for his bride, he must show how gentle, loving, patient, and unselfish he can be. In return, Ferdinand warmly assures him that, his love being true and honourable, no test will seem hard to win Miranda in the end, so Prospero goes away, leaving the lovers all alone together for the first time.

The magician has gone to summon Ariel, whom he now directs to guide the shipwrecked mariners to

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this spot, while he amuses the lovers with a pageant, in which Iris, the rainbow, Ceres, the goddess of plenty, and Juno, goddess of the atmosphere, appear in turn to promise them all manner of earthly bliss. After a ballet, in which nymphs and reapers are the performers, this pageant ends, just as Prospero mutters it is about time to prepare to outwit Caliban, who is coming hither with two drunken companions to slay him.

While Ferdinand and Miranda withdraw to the cave, Prospero summons Ariel, bidding him hang out upon a line sundry articles of rich clothing brought from the cave. These garments are to serve as bait for Caliban and his mates, who soon after appear, closely watched by the invisible Prospero and Ariel. At the sight of rich clothing, the Butler and Jester greedily seize and prepare to put it on, but even while they are thus engaged, spirits in the shape of huntsmen and hounds, suddenly attack them as if they were game, and drive them out of sight, while the magician and sprite egg them on by loud hunting calls.

ACT V. In the fifth act, Prospero, clad in his magician robes, appears in front of his cell, inquiring of Ariel how soon their joint labours will be concluded? The sprite replies the end is now very near, for he has left the King of Naples and his companions close by, under a spell they will not be able to break until they are released. On learning that some of these prisoners seem almost mad from remorse, and that even Ariel pities them, Prospero promises to restore their senses as soon as they are

brought before him. It is while Ariel goes in quest of the noblemen, that Prospero declares this task safely accomplished, he'll break his wand, and cease for ever to practise magic!

Just then appear within the magic circle drawn by Prospero, the King of Naples and his train, all under a spell they cannot break, which enables the magician to address them, thanking the councillor for his kindly help, reproving the King of Naples, and telling the conspirators that he forgives them, knowing they will soon realise the enormity of their past offence. Then, calling for his ducal attire so he can make himself known as master of Milan, Prospero is arrayed by Ariel, whom he promises soon to free, directing him first to bring the ship's crew to this spot.

Ariel having vanished, Prospero releases the noblemen from the spell which has held them enchained, whereupon the councillor gasps he wishes 'some heavenly power' would guide them 'out of this fearful country.'

While making brief replies to their questions in regard to his escape, Prospero relates his coming to the island, telling the King of Naples, who alludes to his recent sorrow, that he can sympathise with him, as the same tempest has robbed him of his only daughter. The King expressing deep regret that the young people should not have survived their parents to rule together over Naples, Prospero suddenly grants him a glimpse into the cave, where he beholds Miranda and Ferdinand, apparently playing chess, but in reality so absorbed in each other that

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they pay little heed to their game, and are lost to all the world besides.

For a brief moment the King of Naples deems this lovely sight one of the many delusions of which he has been victim since landing on this island, but is overjoyed when convinced that it is real. At that moment, Ferdinand, becoming aware at last of his father's presence, falls upon his neck, exclaiming rapturously, 'Though the seas threaten, they are merciful!'

The two fathers gladly bless their children, who are to be King and Queen of Naples, and the young couple are still receiving the congratulations of the noblemen, when Ariel appears, bringing the Master of the vessel and the Boatswain, both of whom are amazed to behold their august passengers safe, and delighted to report their vessel unharmed.

Meantime, still at Prospero's bidding, Ariel goes in quest of Caliban, the Butler, and Jester, whom he next drives on the stage still tricked out in stolen apparel. While the noblemen easily recognise their two shipmates, Prospero explains that Caliban, his man, has induced these two villains to come and murder him in his sleep. They are, of course, unable to refute this accusation, and when Caliban learns that the creatures whom he took for gods are mere drunkards, he humbly returns to his old servitude, and, at Prospero's command, goes off with them to trim the cave for the reception of august guests.

Prospero then invites the noblemen into his cell, where he promises to entertain them that evening

with a detailed account of his adventures, adding that Ariel will favour them on the morrow with breezes which will soon enable them to reach home. There, Ferdinand and Miranda are to be married, and his daughter being happy as future Queen of Naples, Prospero proposes to withdraw to Milan, to prepare for death.

Having finally released the happy Ariel from bondage, Prospero, in an epilogue, takes leave of the spectators, begging them to free him, in his turn, by granting him their applause.

AS YOU LIKE IT

ACT I. The first act opens in an orchard where Orlando and his servant Adam are engrossed in conversation, Orlando stating that if he remembers correctly, his father bequeathed him a certain sum, bidding his elder brother Oliver educate him. He complains, however, that, instead of obeying these injunctions, Oliver has allowed him to remain untrained, although his actions show he is one of nature's gentlemen.

To prove to his old servant how unkindly Oliver treats him, Orlando bids the man lurk in the neighbourhood, and listen to their conversation, for his elder brother is just approaching. Oliver begins by roughly inquiring what Orlando is 'making or marring,' becoming indignant when told that God's handiwork is, indeed, being marred, since his brother is left in ignorance and treated like a prodigal, although he has never behaved like one.

While not begrudging his elder brother the lion's share of his father's fortune, Orlando, nevertheless, reproaches him for unfraternal conduct, thereby so enraging Oliver that he tries to lay violent hands upon him. This insult is hotly resented by Orlando, who vows he will not remain here to be ill-treated, and compels his brother to hear a few bitter truths ere demanding his portion. This provokes his dis-

missal empty handed, Oliver bidding Adam accompany him when he attempts to intercede.

Adam and Orlando have barely left the stage when Oliver begins plotting to punish his brother for his impudence. Inquiring of a servant whether the wrestler has arrived, and learning that the man awaits his pleasure, he has him summoned. Then he jocosely inquires what the news may be, and learns that the good old duke, banished by a wicked younger brother, has sought refuge in the forest of Arden (Ardennes), whither many lords have gone into voluntary exile to keep him company. In reply to Oliver's inquiry as to what has become of Rosalind, the good duke's daughter, the wrestler explains she has been kept at court as companion to her uncle's child, for whom she feels more than cousinly affection.

This news retailed, the wrestler announces he is to exhibit his talents before the usurping duke on the morrow, and has come to warn Oliver not to allow his brother to measure strength with him, as he might injure a stripling. Thanking him for his kindly meant warning, Oliver states his brother has been guilty of such ingratitude that he should feel no regret should an accident befall him; whereupon the wrestler departs, promising to give Orlando,—whom Oliver has painted in the blackest colors,—due punishment for his supposed crime. When he has gone, Oliver, fearing lest Orlando may not challenge the wrestler, decides to taunt him so artfully, that he will be sure to try his luck on the morrow.

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The next scene is played on the lawn before the duke's palace, where the two cousins are standing together, Celia vainly trying to cheer Rosalind by telling her that although her father is an exile, she ought to be thankful not to be parted from her friend. To comfort Rosalind for her fallen fortunes, Celia adds, that, being her father's only daughter and heir, she will, at his death, restore the usurped duchy to its rightful owner.

The young ladies are still discussing these matters and wondering how to beguile the time until evening, when Touchstone appears, summoning them to join the duke. When this jester quaintly swears by his honour he was sent for them, the girls teasingly inquire where he learned such an oath, whereupon he whimsically demonstrates how easy it is to swear by what one doesn't possess! The three are still engaged in a playful war of wit when another messenger comes, exclaiming the ladies have lost the greater part of the afternoon's sport, during which the wrestler, pitted against three brothers, has defeated them all in turn, to the lasting grief of their aged father. He adds, however, that the match is not over, a stripling having just challenged the champion to wrestle with him on this very lawn.

A moment later a flourish of trumpets announces the arrival of the usurping duke, followed by his train, which includes the wrestler and Orlando. When the girls perceive how young and slender the challenger seems, they express great pity, only to be told the duke has vainly tried to deter him from risking his life. As a last hope, he now begs the

ladies to try what they can do; so, while Celia quietly advises Orlando to give up the rash attempt for his own sake, Rosalind, with better comprehension of human nature, inquires whether he would withdraw should she persuade the duke to forbid the match?

Although touched by the solicitude they show, Orlando quietly declares nothing would induce him to desist, adding that should he be slain no one will mourn him. Seeing him determined, the girls wish they might add their small store of strength to his own, thus enabling him to win, a kindness which nerves Orlando to do his best, for he hopes to earn the approval of Rosalind, with whom he has fallen in love at first sight.

When, therefore, the call comes for the match, Orlando springs forward, and closing with his antagonist, writhes a while to and fro, ere he throws the famous champion by a sudden clever turn. So severe is the fall, that the wrestler has to be carried off the field unconscious, while the duke demands the victor's name. On hearing that he is Orlando, third son of Sir Rowland de Boys, the usurper frowns, for he is aware that this nobleman was a loyal partisan of his deposed brother.

Instead of praising Orlando for his victory, therefore, he marches haughtily off the stage, no one remaining on the green save the abashed victor, and the two young ladies. The former assures the latter that he is proud of being his father's son, whereat Rosalind replies that since his father was a friend of hers, she will atone for the duke's slight, and show her appreciation for what he has done, by giving

him the little golden chain she wears around her neck, although she knows it is but a trifling gift. Having thus shown her favour, she departs with Celia, leaving the youth to regret he had not sufficient presence of mind to express his gratitude as he should.

It is while Orlando stands there musing, that one of the courtiers comes back to caution him to leave as soon as possible, as the duke in his wrath may resort to treacherous measures. Although grateful for this warning, Orlando is so anxious to ascertain who the ladies are, that he questions the courtier, thus learning that Rosalind and Celia have been brought up together and are closely bound in friendship, although the duke has recently taken such a dislike to his niece that his displeasure will probably soon break forth. Having given this information, the courtier departs, and Orlando, deciding that he must 'fly from the smoke into the smother,' vanishes.

We next behold a room in the palace, where the girls are discussing the wrestling match, Celia slyly accusing Rosalind of having fallen in love with the youthful champion. Unable to deny the soft impeachment, Rosalind tries to account for her infatuation by her father's love for the parent of the young man, until surprised by the sudden appearance of the usurping duke. His long-smouldering anger now breaks forth in a rough order to Rosalind to leave his court, under penalty of death should she be found within twenty miles of it in ten days' time. When his niece gently asks how she has incurred his

displeasure, he reviles her as a traitor, revealing, however, that the main cause of his displeasure is the fact that she is her father's daughter!

Although Celia now eloquently pleads to have Rosalind remain, the wicked duke vows that as long as her cousin is at court she will never receive her full share of honors, and having reiterated Rosalind is banished, leaves the apartment. The young ladies first fall upon each other's neck, bewailing what has occurred; then Celia loyally declares that, as nothing will ever induce her to part from her friend, by one sentence her father has banished them both. When Rosalind sadly inquires whither they shall wander, Celia suggests they join the banished duke in the forest of Arden, proposing male apparel to enable them to travel thither unchallenged. This plan meets with Rosalind's approval, save that she decides one of them garbed as a man can serve as protector for the other, and that, being the taller of the two, she must personate the escort. Next the girls select romantic names, and sally forth to collect their valuables, don their travelling costumes, and secure the escort of the Jester, on whose devotion they can rely.

ACT II. The second act opens in the forest of Arden, where the banished duke is sitting beneath the trees, in the company of his fellow-exiles, remarking that although they feel the season's differences, the uses of adversity are sweet, as they have taught him to find 'tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones and good in everything.' One of his friends warmly congratulates

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him upon having reached this advanced stage of philosophy, before informing him that 'the melancholy Jaques,' one of their number, recently shed sentimental tears over a wounded stag, moralising on its suffering and on the indifference shown by its fellow-creatures. Because the banished duke has often found Jaques good company, he decides to hasten to the spot where this sentimentalist is weeping over the stricken deer.

The scene now changes to a room in the palace of the usurping duke, where he is cross-questioning those around him, in hopes of finding some trace of his missing daughter and niece. He learns that, after retiring as usual, the girls must have escaped with the Jester, no clue having been found to their destination, although it is rumoured in the palace that they joined the young wrestler whose feats they so admired. These tidings add such fuel to the duke's wrath, that he has Oliver summoned, intending to demand from him the surrender of the run-aways.

The scene is transferred to Oliver's house, at the moment when, returning from the match, Orlando encounters the delighted Adam. But, although glad to see him victorious, Adam hints he would have done better not to return home at all, as Oliver, having failed to get rid of him in this way, is planning to burn him alive! Finding it inadvisable to remain at home under these circumstances, Orlando wonders where he can go, whereupon Adam generously offers him the savings of a lifetime, proposing, moreover, to attend him, although nearly four-score

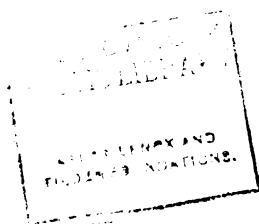


Emile Bayard

ROSALIND GIVES ORLANDO A CHAIN

Ros. "Wear this for me, one out of suits with fortune,
That could give more, but that her hand lacks means,"

'ou Like It. Act 1, Scene 2,



years of age. Touched by his generosity and devotion, Orlando accepts, realising that his brother's house is equally unsafe for both of them, and hoping soon to be able to provide for his own and his aged servant's needs.

The next scene is played in the forest of Arden, whither Rosalind, in boy's apparel, Celia, dressed like a peasant girl, and the Jester sink down exhausted by the wayside. When Rosalind exclaims that her spirits are weary, the Jester quaintly vows his spirits would not matter were only his legs less tired, and seems half inclined to follow her example when she declares she could find it in her heart to cry like a woman, notwithstanding her manly attire. The trio have been walking many days, the distance being great between the duchy and this forest, and are therefore so worn out with fatigue, and so faint from lack of food, that they are unable to proceed another step. The Jester, after ruefully emitting sundry whimsical remarks on the folly of travelling, decides, 'when I was at home, I was in a better place: but travellers must be content!'

It is while all three are wondering where they are, and how they can procure food and shelter, that a couple of shepherds stroll toward them, the younger confiding to the elder his passion for the shepherdess Phebe, describing his feelings so graphically that Rosalind realises for the first time her heart is undergoing similar pangs for Orlando. The Jester quaintly comments that he, too, once knew what it is to be in love, but Celia, too exhausted to heed anything save her weariness, prosaically urges her com-

panions to address the older shepherd and try and obtain aid.

In reply to the question of Rosalind,—whom he naturally takes for a lad,—the old shepherd states that, although sorry for Celia, he cannot assist her, his master having just dismissed him, for he is on the point of selling his farm to the young shepherd who has just left him. On hearing there is a farm for sale in the neighbourhood, Rosalind and Celia, who are well provided with funds, suddenly decide to purchase it, retaining the old man as their servant at higher wages, news so welcome to their interlocutor, that he joyfully bids them follow him to the farm, where he vows they will be welcome.

The deserted forest glade is next occupied by some of the duke's merry outlaws, who sing a hunting song which delights the 'melancholy Jaques,' and to which they daily add some verses. Having finished singing their most recent addition, the huntsmen depart, to announce to the duke that a banquet awaits him.

We next behold Orlando and Adam, who have also made their way to the forest of Arden, and who, like the girls and the Jester, have found the journey long and weary. Both are so faint from hunger, that poor old Adam sinks down by the wayside, bidding his master forsake him, since he cannot drag himself another step. After trying to stimulate Adam by saying that a little food will restore his strength and spirits, Orlando lays him down beneath a tree, bidding him hold fast to life until his return, for he is going into the forest to get him something

to eat, vowing he will do so or lose his life in the attempt!

Meantime, the duke and his companions have gathered around the venison they have slain, and are just wondering why Jaques does not appear when he joins them, relating how he has been detained in the forest by a most edifying conversation with a Fool. He claims that 'motley's the only wear,' and begs the duke to appoint him Fool of his forest court, for such an office would enable him to tell the truth in guise of a jest. They have just reached this point in the conversation when Orlando rushes upon them with drawn sword, bidding them refrain from touching the food before them, under penalty of death!

The duke, surprised, first inquires why he should be debarred from partaking of his own game; then, suspecting the intruder is in sore need of food, generously offers to overlook his rudeness, and invites him to partake of the meal. In response Orlando eloquently describes what a starving man endures, adding that before he can touch food himself, he must, 'like a doe to a fawn,' return to the aged servant who has followed him for love's sake, but who has dropped down exhausted. On hearing this, the tender-hearted duke bids Orlando fetch his companion, promising that not a morsel shall be eaten until the weary travellers can share the meal. Then, while Orlando vanishes into the forest, the melancholy Jaques soliloquises over what has occurred, declaring that 'all the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players,' and describing the seven ages of man in sentences so

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graphic that they have become world-renowned quotations.

He has barely finished when Orlando re-enters, carrying Adam, whom he sets down by the outlaws, heartily thanking them for their kindness to him and to his aged retainer. Seeing the wanderers' pressing need for food, the duke bids both fall to, while his men entertain them with a song. This over, the duke, who has been studying Orlando's countenance, recognises his strong resemblance to an old friend on learning his name, and therefore bids him welcome to Arden. Old Adam, strengthened by food, finally manages to stand, and hobble off in company of the rest.

ACT III. The third act opens in the palace, where the wicked duke is interviewing Oliver, who swears his brother has not been seen since the wrestling match, although he has eagerly sought him. Not believing this statement, the duke angrily orders him to produce his brother alive or dead, within the next twelvemonth, or forfeit his property, which is confiscated in the meantime. When Oliver protests against this decree, saying he never loved his brother, the duke reproves him, and turns him out.

We now return to the forest of Arden, where Orlando is hanging verses on a tree, for ever since his first encounter with Rosalind, he has been so deeply in love with her, that he has written innumerable poems in her honour, and has carved her name on every trunk! Having hung his last effusion upon a bough, Orlando departs, his place being soon occupied by the old shepherd and Jester, the former

quizzically inquiring of the latter how he enjoys rural life? In reply, the Jester emits sundry philosophical remarks, ere he challenges his rustic companion to show what he can do in that line, thus eliciting from him a few aphorisms which demonstrate that he is a born philosopher.

They have just finished a quaint exposition of their respective points of view, when Rosalind, still disguised as a youth, enters, reading aloud one of the many poems she has discovered in the forest, all of which, to her intense amazement, contain her name. When the Jester, who overhears her declaiming this last production, inclines to poke fun at it, Rosalind chides him, whereupon he improvises ridiculous rhymes, which he pronounces fully equal to those she holds, although they did not sprout from a tree! They are still good-naturedly sparring on this subject, when Celia, as peasant girl, arrives perusing another poem, wherein Rosalind is described as possessing the combined charms of Helen, Cleopatra,¹ Atalanta, and Lucretia.

But, although this poem tickles Rosalind's vanity, she pronounces it tedious as a sermon, until, left alone with Celia, she wonders how it happens she should be known so far away from home? Her friend then informs her that the poet wears her chain about his neck, rejoicing when Rosalind changes colour, and making her confess that, notwithstanding male attire, she still suffers from feminine curiosity. Then she reveals how she has met Orlando in the forest, whereupon Rosalind asks ten

¹ See Guerber's 'Story of the Romans.'

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eager questions in a breath, imploring her friend to answer in a word, an impossible feat Celia laughingly declines to perform. It is only after some time that Rosalind discovers how Celia surprised the youth, lying in the forest, in huntsman attire, composing some of the verses with which he decks the trees.

While they are still talking, seeing Orlando and Jaques come toward them, the girls hide in the thicket, hoping to overhear what they are saying. Jaques is terming Orlando a poor companion, a compliment the youth returns in kind. Then Jaques bids the youth cease disfiguring trees with love tokens, although in the next breath he curiously inquires who the Rosalind may be whom the youth so fervently addresses?

In reply to a query from Jaques relating to his sweetheart's stature, Orlando pronounces Rosalind 'just as high as my heart,' adding that if, as his companion avers, his worst folly consists in being in love, he would not exchange it for Jaques' best virtue!

After a little more conversation, Jaques leaves Orlando beneath a tree, and the moment seeming auspicious, Rosalind, confident not to be recognised in man's garb, whispers to Celia that she is going to play the part of a saucy page. A second later, creeping cautiously out of the thicket, Rosalind peers at Orlando from behind the tree, asking the time. When he reproves her for using the expression 'the lazy foot of time,' she saucily describes how time passes for different persons under varying circumstances.

These sprightly speeches so captivate Orlando's fancy that he inquires where this page resides, only to learn that his farm is situated on the 'skirts of the forest, like fringe upon a petticoat.' He also discovers that his interlocutor's education is due to a learned uncle, of whose wisdom the page volunteers samples, ere, deeming it time to turn the tables, he suddenly says some lover must be lurking near, as 'Rosalind' is carved on every tree, while rhymes in her honour flutter from every bush. When Orlando pleads guilty to being this lovelorn swain, the page vows he bears none of the usual hall-marks of a lover, which consist in lean cheeks, sunken eyes, and neglected apparel.

Notwithstanding this lack, Orlando assures the page he is a lover indeed, grieving sorely because parted from the object of his passion. Thereupon the page offers to cure him by personating Rosalind, declaring that although a mere lad, he can counterfeit women so well, that if Orlando will only make love to him as to his sweetheart, he will soon cease to suffer. Although averring no remedy exists for his complaint, Orlando consents to try the plan, ere he and the page disappear into the forest depths, just as the Jester strolls on the scene with a shepherdess, whom he is helping gather her goats.

Their conversation is overheard by the melancholy Jaques, who seems duly amused when the Jester wooes this shepherdess in terms she cannot understand, and concludes with the proposal to be married by the vicar of a neighbouring village. Although dull and matter-of-fact, the shepherdess read-

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ily understands a proposal, and has barely signified consent, when a clerical gentleman appears. He is not, however, an orthodox incumbent, but an unaccredited priest, Sir Oliver Martext, and gravely refuses to marry the couple unless some one gives away the bride. Thereupon the melancholy Jaques volunteers his services, although he declares he deems it hardly seemly for a couple to be married like gypsies under a bush. This remark convinces the Jester that this is not the vicar he needs, so he withdraws with the shepherdess, deciding to be properly married some other day.

The next scene is played in the forest between Rosalind and Celia, the former declaring she is inclined to weep and the latter teasingly retorting that such behaviour would ill become her array. Rosalind's grief is caused by the fact that after promising to come that morning, Orlando has not yet appeared! In the course of the ensuing conversation, Rosalind mentions meeting her father in the forest, saying that, owing to her disguise, the duke failed to recognise her, although he asked her name. Even so momentous an occurrence, however, cannot hold her attention long, for she soon returns to the theme of Orlando, compelling Celia to admit that 'he writes brave verses, speaks brave words,' and seems deeply in love.

Their conversation is interrupted by the arrival of the old shepherd, reporting that in case they care to hear the youth whom they recently overheard, woo his shepherdess, he will guide them to a place in the forest, from whence they can listen unseen.

Both Rosalind and Celia gladly follow him, for 'the sight of lovers feedeth those in love!'

The scene is now transferred to a different part of the forest, where Phebe is being sued by the young shepherd, while Rosalind, Celia, and their old retainer peep out from the thicket. The shepherdess seems obdurate at first, although the swain tells her that while she may not love him now, the time will come when, knowing what it is to love in vain, she will pity his sorrows. Rosalind, in page's garb, now emerges from the thicket to inform Phebe how foolishly she is behaving, for although young and good-looking at present, she cannot always count upon so worthy a suitor as the youth now offering his hand.

While pretending to listen to this lecture, Phebe ogles the youthful page, with whom she has fallen in love, although he has repeatedly told her it is in vain. After bidding her fall down on her knees, 'and thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love,' the page departs with his companions; leaving the shepherd to complain that Phebe refuses his offers for the sake of this lad who has recently purchased the neighbouring farm! He feels somewhat comforted, however, when she proposes to write the 'peevish boy' a letter, rebuking him for his impudence, and asks the shepherd to deliver it.

ACT IV. The fourth act opens in the forest where Rosalind, Celia, and Jaques having met, the latter, anxious to learn more concerning the newcomers, asks questions which Rosalind saucily answers, saying they have heard how melancholy he is.

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Jaques then explains that his melancholy is of a peculiar sort, being neither that of the scholar, the musician, the courtier, the soldier, the lawyer, the lady, or the lover, although compounded of all these various kinds. He adds that in the course of his life he has collected a vast amount of experience, whereupon Rosalind pertly retorts that if experience only serves to make him sad, it would be better to have none!

They are still wittily sparring, when Orlando appears, and the melancholy Jaques, dreading lest they may talk in verse, hastens away. Evidently Rosalind has been pining for the sight of her lover, for she twits him with his absence, pretending to be his lady-love, and eggs him on to make such a proposal as he would fain offer to his sweetheart. Playing her part to perfection, Rosalind pretends to flout him, stating, when he threatens to kill himself, that although the world is six thousand years old, and innumerable lovers have already existed, 'men have died from time to time and worms have eaten them, but not for love!' Although so wilful, she finally accepts his hand, suggesting a mock marriage, wherein Celia personates the priest and unites her to Orlando. This simulated ceremony is barely over, when Rosalind peremptorily inquires how long Orlando would love his lady should he win her? When he ardently swears 'forever and a day,' she promptly retorts 'men are April when they woo, December when they wed.' After a little more talk with the saucy page,—who positively fascinates him,—Orlando leaves to join the duke at dinner,

promising to return in two hours' time, under penalty of forfeiting his friend's good opinion. Then Celia vehemently reproaches her companion for wanton behaviour, although Rosalind vows it proves her love for the youth, who still deems her the lad she appears.

The girls have just left the glade when the melancholy Jaques and a band of foresters return from the hunt, bearing the deer they have slain for the duke's dinner, and celebrate their triumph by a joyful song.

At the end of two hours, Rosalind and Celia revisit the trysting-spot in the forest, where, instead of Orlando, they are met by the youthful shepherd, delivering Phebe's letter. Pretending to believe he has written this missive himself, Rosalind reads it aloud to him, vowing the fulsome compliments it contains are pure irony, and bidding the shepherd, instead of other answer, carry back to Phebe the message, 'If she love me, I charge her to love thee,' words the swain is delighted to transmit.

He has barely gone when Oliver comes upon the scene, inquiring the locality of the farm where he will find a saucy page to whom he is bearing a message? After a little beating about the bush, discovering he is addressing the very lad he seeks, he reports that his brother bade him carry to the youth whom he calls 'Rosalind' in sport, a bloody handkerchief. Then, Oliver describes how, after leaving them, Orlando discovered a wayfarer lying beneath a tree, with a deadly serpent coiled around his neck, while a lioness crouched in a neighbouring

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thicket, ready to devour him as soon as a movement revealed he was still alive! While hesitating how to deliver the unconscious sleeper from his double peril, Orlando suddenly recognized in him his cruel brother; but, too generous to avenge past wrongs, he drove away the snake, and, standing between the lioness and sleeper, killed the wild beast, which wounded him in the fray.

The girls interrupt this story with exclamations and comments, ere learning how, reconciled to his brother, Oliver accompanied him to the duke's cave, where, when Orlando fainted away, his wound was discovered. It was on recovering from this swoon that he begged his brother explain his absence to the page, delivering the bloody handkerchief as voucher of the truth of his tale.

Rosalind, who has listened with keenest interest to this story, no sooner beholds the gory token than she faints away, behaviour passing strange on the part of a man, however natural on that of a woman. But her unconsciousness is very brief, and when she recovers, she bids Oliver tell his brother how cleverly a page could simulate a swoon!

ACT V. In the fifth act we see the Jester and shepherdess wandering in the forest, still commenting on their narrow escape from being married by a man not entitled to perform the sacred ceremony. Then the Jester inquires whether his lady-love has ever had other suitors, only to learn that she has been wooed by a clown who now appears, and stupidly answers all the questions asked. After lecturing this simpleton for not pushing his advantage,

telling him to learn that 'to have, is to have,' the Jester and the shepherdess are summoned by the old shepherd to appear before the duke.

We next see the brothers, Oliver and Orlando, in the forest, just as the latter declares it is strange that, having only lately beheld Celia, Oliver should have fallen so deeply in love with her, that he can no longer exist without her! The depth of this new-born passion is proved, however, when Oliver proposes to give up everything and turn shepherd for the sake of his peasant lady-love. While fully approving of Oliver's devotion to Celia, and expressing delight at their approaching marriage, Orlando sees the page draw near, so gladly allows his brother to depart.

Touched by all her lover has undergone, Rosalind expresses regret to see his arm in a sling, inquires whether he heard of the simulated swoon, and reports that Celia and his brother are so deeply in love that they are to be united on the morrow in the presence of the duke. When Orlando sadly remarks that the sight of such happiness intensifies his loneliness, the saucy page, whom he has hitherto been wooing in mocking style, volunteers to play the part of Rosalind at the altar, too.

As Orlando ruefully admits that pretence does not satisfy the heart, the page suddenly proposes to use magic arts to bring Rosalind to the forest on the morrow, ready to marry him. This promise seems vain to Orlando, who is still brooding over it, when the young shepherd and Phebe draw near. The latter hotly reproaches the page for showing her

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letter, whereupon Rosalind replies it was done on purpose, the shepherd alone being worthy of her love. Then the page proves how deeply the shepherd is enamoured, by making him describe his passion, Phebe exclaiming that he exactly expresses her feelings for the page, who saucily retorts he never felt such symptoms for any woman, while Orlando sighs it is thus he loves Rosalind. At the end of this whimsical scene, the page expresses readiness to help the shepherd, adding that should he ever marry a woman it will be Phebe, but exacting in exchange for this conditional promise her solemn pledge to marry page or shepherd on the morrow!

This settled, the group breaks up, its different members agreeing to meet at the trysting-spot in the forest on the morrow. A moment later the Jester and shepherdess stroll forward, conversing so intimately that they seem only half pleased when the duke's pages come to entertain them with a song.

The next scene is also played in the forest, where the banished duke has gathered his friends to grace a quadruple wedding. Turning to Orlando, he wonderingly inquires whether he deems it possible the saucy page should carry out so rash a promise, whereupon Orlando replies that at times he believes and at times he does not, never knowing what to think of the tricky youth.

Just then the page appears with the shepherd, and asks the duke whether he will consent to bestow his daughter upon Orlando? The duke having promised to do so, the page next asks Orlando whether he will marry Rosalind, obtaining the prompt reply:

‘That would I, were I of all kingdoms king.’ Turning to the shepherdess the page then mischievously inquires whether she is still ready to marry him, repeating the promise that, failing him, she will espouse the shepherd? This promise being wrung from Phebe, together with a corresponding one from the shepherd, Rosalind, sure her arrangements are all complete, departs with Celia, under pretext of summoning the duke’s daughter by magic arts.

It is only after she has gone that the duke comments upon a peculiar resemblance between this lad and his beloved daughter, a likeness Orlando has noticed, and which has made him fancy the page a brother of his lady-love. The melancholy Jaques also announces the approach of Jester and shepherdess, whimsically remarking that another flood must be near, since so many couples are preparing to take refuge in the ark! In the conversation which ensues between Jaques, the duke, and the Jester, the latter keeps interrupting himself, to give instructions in regard to her behaviour to his rustic bride, meanwhile favouring the others with a synopsis of the most approved formulas for challenging and duelling.

The appearance of Hymen, god of marriage, escorting Celia and Rosalind in woman’s garb, interrupts this conversation, and the duke discovers his daughter has come here so he can witness her marriage to the lover of her choice, although she confesses she owes equal allegiance to them both. Although almost too surprised to speak, neither father nor lover seems inclined to disown her, while Phebe,

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who has been gazing in open-mouthed astonishment at the transformed page, now bids farewell to her illusions and prepares to marry the shepherd.

The fourfold marriage ceremony under Hymen's ministrations, is barely over, when Orlando's second brother appears, saying he is sent to atone for the wrong the usurping duke has done. Thereupon, he describes how the usurper set out to pursue and slay his brother, but that on entering the forest of Arden, he met a holy hermit, who, after converting him from his evil ways, persuaded him to relinquish his ill-gotten estates, and retire into a monastery.

The rightful duke now decrees that Orlando shall have his duchy with his daughter's hand, that Oliver shall recover his estates, and Jaques have sole possession of his cave!

The epilogue of this play is recited by Rosalind, although that part is not generally awarded to a lady. She declares that just as 'good wine needs no bush,' a 'good play needs no epilogue,' before 'conjuring' the audience by stating that for the love they bear men the women cannot help liking this play, while for the love they bear the women, the men will do likewise.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

ACT I. The first act opens in a street in Venice, where Antonio, a wealthy middle-aged merchant, talking to two acquaintances, wonders why he feels vaguely sad and apprehensive. When his friends suggest that, having many vessels at sea exposed to all the winds that blow, he necessarily is anxious, he denies it, as he does also being in love.

Before the cause of this strange melancholy is discovered, Bassanio joins this group with two companions, who talk and laugh and appoint a meeting at dinner, although Antonio seems disinclined for festivities. Still, as he has remarked that every man has some part to play in the world, one of the speakers, Gratiano, expresses a preference for the rôle of fool, mirth and laughter being more desirable than melancholy.

Left alone with Bassanio, Antonio comments on the nonsense just uttered, ere inquiring with whom his friend has fallen in love? In reply Bassanio states that, although enamoured of a beautiful lady, he cannot sue for her hand, because he has squandered his fortune, and is deeply in debt to Antonio and others. Instead of reproaching him, Antonio generously consents to make another loan, which Bassanio accepts in hopes of making all good when he has won Portia, the lady of Belmont, with whom

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he has found favour, although she is besieged with suitors. Because all his funds are at present at sea, Antonio decides to use his credit to borrow the necessary sum for his friend's use.

We are next transported to Portia's dwelling, where she is expressing great weariness of the world to Nerissa, her companion, who slyly suggests her mistress is suffering from superfluity, rather than from any other complaint. She supports the good advice she gives with maxims, which Portia scorns or caps, ere she attributes her troubles to her father's lottery, which leaves her no choice in regard to her future husband. This father, however, was wise and virtuous, as Nerissa maintains, and his lottery scheme shrewd, for he decreed that Portia's suitors should select among three chests—one of gold, one of silver, and one of lead—that containing her portrait, or forfeit her hand.

Many suitors have already come, whom Nerissa names while Portia pithily describes them, vowing she feels little inclination for the horsey Neapolitan, the melancholy German, the fickle Frenchman, the dumb Englishman, the niggardly Scotchman, or the drunken Saxon, who have come to woo. She therefore feels no regret when told that these suitors, dreading the test, are about to depart, and joyfully exclaims, 'I dote on their very absence!'

Then Nerissa states that no suitor ever seemed so attractive as the Venetian Bassanio, who visited them in her father's lifetime, a man whom Portia charily admits was worthy of praise. Their conversation is interrupted by the announcement that the strangers

wish to take leave, and that a Moroccan prince has just arrived to undergo the casket test. After expressing great readiness to speed the parting guests, Portia idly wonders whether the newcomer will prove a bolder, or more acceptable suitor than his predecessors.

We now behold a public square in Venice, where Bassanio is asking the money-lending Jew, Shylock, to loan Antonio three thousand ducats for three months. Gravely repeating each statement, Shylock thoughtfully remarks Antonio is a good man, although his funds, at present invested in fleets, seem in jeopardy. After some hesitation, he asks to confer with Antonio in person, so Bassanio invites him to dine with them both, an invitation the Jew scorns, fearing viands unclean. He therefore retorts in surly tones, 'I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following, but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you.'

They are about to separate, when Antonio appears; whereupon Shylock mutters he hates him for being a Christian, and for lending money without interest, whereby sundry debtors have been saved from his clutches. On that account, he cherishes an 'ancient grudge' against Antonio, and, brooding upon past insults heaped upon him, determines to be revenged.

Pretending to consider the loan, he murmurs he can obtain the money from a fellow-countryman, so when Antonio joins them, there is some shrewd bargaining, in the course of which Shylock expresses

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ironical surprise that Antonio, who never deals with usurers, should apply to him. Confessing he has never done so before, and is breaking a rule merely to oblige his friend, Antonio listens to Shylock's exposition of Jacob's stratagem, which he quotes as a justification for usurious methods, adding piously that 'Thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.'

Carelessly retorting that even the devil quotes Scripture to attain his ends, Antonio shows contempt for such reasoning, while Shylock apparently cogitates on the subject of the loan. On being pressed to give a definite answer, he wonders that Antonio, who has frequently rated him on the Rialto, should apply to *him* for funds. His eloquent speech betrays how deeply such treatment rankles, but his manner is so offensive that Antonio haughtily informs him he will probably treat him with contumely again, and proposes borrowing only on a business basis. But, when he rashly offers to bind himself by any penalty the Jew chooses to impose, Shylock suddenly becomes pliant and friendly, and offers to loan the money without interest, provided Antonio will sign a bond pledging himself 'in a merry sport' to allow the Jew to cut a pound of his flesh on payment day, should the necessary sum not be forthcoming.

Believing such a condition imposed as a blind for granting a favour, Antonio gratefully accepts it, exclaiming: 'There is much kindness in the Jew,' although Bassanio implores him not to subscribe to anything so extraordinary. To reassure his anxious friend, Antonio tells him that long before payment

is due, he will have three times the amount at hand, and Shylock, fearing his revenge may escape him, urges immediate settlement, asseverating he would gain nothing by the forfeiture of the bond, as a pound of human flesh is of less value than the same amount of mutton!

Thus persuaded of Shylock's good faith, Antonio promises to meet him at the notary's, where, the document being signed, the money will be paid. So the Jew prepares to return home, where, an unscrupulous knave being in charge of his property, loss may accrue to him.

He has no sooner departed, than Antonio vows he is growing kind, while Bassanio, who likes not 'fair terms and a villain's mind,' dreads the outcome of this affair, in spite of all his friend's confidence in his ventures.

ACT II. The second act opens in Portia's house, where all is prepared for the solemn reception of the Moroccan prince, who,—about to undergo the casket test,—begs Portia not to be prejudiced by his dark complexion, which he would not change for any purpose save to win her heart. Thereupon Portia coldly rejoins that, her father having decreed her hand should be awarded to the discoverer of the right casket, she has no choice, but must first exact his promise that in case of failure, he will depart immediately, and will never marry or reveal the contents of the chest he opened. Then she proposes to accompany him to the temple and entertain him at dinner ere he try his fate.

We are next transported to a street in Venice,

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where the Jew's servant, Launcelot, is soliloquising on the fact that the fiend tempts him to run away from his master, although his conscience disapproves of such a move. He is trying to justify himself under the plea that the Jew is a devil, and that no Christian should serve one, when his blind father appears, bringing a present of doves to Shylock. A practical joker, Launcelot amuses himself in bewildering poor old Gobbo, who little suspects he is asking directions of his own son. Still, after mischievously rousing his father's fears for his safety, Launcelot makes himself known, assuring Gobbo 'it is a wise father that knows his own child,' and begging him to bestow his present, not upon the Jew, but upon Bassanio, whom he is now anxious to serve.

Just then Bassanio is heard giving his servant sundry orders, so Launcelot and his father approach, humbly offering him the present intended for the Jew. In the ensuing scene, Bassanio engages Launcelot, ere father and son depart to take leave of Shylock. Then, Bassanio bids another servant hasten preparations, and have all ready for a feast, ere they two are joined by Gratiano, who begs permission to accompany Bassanio to Belmont, a request first denied, and granted only when Gratiano promises to be discreet after to-night.

We now behold Shylock's house, where his daughter Jessica, parting from Launcelot, regrets his departure, as he has been the one merry inmate of their house. After bestowing her farewell gift, she begs him deliver a letter to Lorenzo, who is to be his new

master's guest, cautioning him, however, not to let her father know anything about it. Launcelot having departed amid tears and compliments, Jessica bewails her own weakness, for she is ashamed of her father, and has fallen in love with a Christian, whom she intends to marry, although she knows such a step will grieve Shylock.

The next scene is played in the street, where Lorenzo explains to some supper guests that during the meal they will slip away to disguise themselves as mummers. When one of them exclaims no torch-bearer has been provided, Lorenzo promises to supply one, just as Launcelot hands him Jessica's letter. Amorously vowing ' 'tis a fair hand ; and whiter than the paper it writ on,' Lorenzo peruses his missive, while his friends envy him. Then he charges Launcelot to tell Jessica he will not fail her, and after dismissing him, informs his companions that a torch-bearer will meet them at Gratiano's lodgings.

The others having gone, Gratiano inquires whether Lorenzo's letter was not from Jessica ; and learns that it contains directions for their elopement, as Jessica is to leave her father's house in the disguise of a page, carrying off all the gold and jewels she can secure. Her clever device so delights Lorenzo, that he vows if Shylock ever reaches heaven, it will be for the sake of this gentle daughter, who is to personate the torch-bearer in their mummary.

The rising curtain now reveals Shylock's house, where, encountering his former servant, the Jew swears he will soon perceive the difference between

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his old and new masters! Because Shylock repeatedly mentions his daughter's name, Launcelot, pretending to think he wants her, calls so loudly that Jessica appears. Then Shylock gives her his keys, saying he is invited to sup with Christians, whose courtesy he will accept to get something out of them. Meantime, he cautions his daughter to look closely after his property, for, having dreamed of money-bags, he is haunted by premonitions of evil.

Afraid lest Shylock may remain at home, Launcelot urges him to accept the invitation, saying a masque is to be given to entertain the guests. Thereupon the Jew, knowing that robberies often occur under cover of diversions, bids Jessica close the windows and not look out, lest while she appear to take pleasure in Christian diversions, thieves steal into his house. But, Launcelot whispers that if she does peer out of the casement, she will behold a Christian whom she will like to see!

Seeing her father suspicious of this whispering, Jessica informs him Launcelot is bidding her farewell, ere she gravely listens to the Jew's strictures on the man's laziness, and his cautions in regard to his property, closing with the well-known proverb, 'Fast bind, fast find.' But, as he departs, Jessica remarks in an aside, 'If my fortune be not crost, I have a father, you a daughter, lost.'

In the same street a while later, Gratiano and a friend stand beneath an awning, wondering why Lorenzo is late, as lovers are proverbially impatient. A moment later he joins them, warmly thanking them for their devotion, and promising his aid when



F. Barth

CHOOSING THE CASKETS

Bass. "But thou, thou meagre lead,
Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,
Thy plainness moves me more than eloquence."

Merchant of Venice. Act 3, Scene 2.

CHINESE
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

they wish to steal wives, ere all three stealthily approach the Jew's dwelling.

Here Jessica soon appears at an upper window, dressed as a boy, timidly inquiring who they are and what they want? After answering Lorenzo's amorous reply in kind, she bids him catch the casket she is lowering, whispering that it contains part of her father's fortune, and vowing she is afraid to be seen in her present garb, which love only has given her courage to don. When Lorenzo tells her she is to be torch-bearer, she ruefully exclaims a less conspicuous position should be allotted her, ere she prepares to join her lover, bringing with her all she can find, as she has systematically plundered the Jew.

While she is descending, Lorenzo informs his waiting friends he loves her dearly because she has proved herself 'wise, fair, and true,' although modern readers of this play fail to agree with him. A moment after Jessica has joined them, the mummers depart, their movements being hastened by Antonio's coming to warn them Bassanio is about to sail.

When the curtain again rises we behold the room in Portia's house where the caskets are stored. Entering with the Moroccan prince, Portia gravely bids him raise the curtain concealing the mysterious chests. Having done so, the suitor reads aloud the inscriptions, which are—'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire' on the golden casket; 'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves' on the silver casket; and 'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath' on the leaden casket.

These inscriptions seem as perplexing as the chests

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themselves, so the prince hesitates which to choose, for only one contains Portia's portrait. After calling upon some god to direct him, he cons the inscriptions, and comes finally to the conclusion that no man would be rash enough to risk anything on base lead, and that, although he does not doubt his own deserts, it will be best not to open the silver chest. Vowing no other metal is worthy to enshrine Portia's image, he unlocks the golden casket, but instead of a portrait finds therein a skull, with a scroll beginning with the time-honoured words, 'All that glisters is not gold,' and closing with the mocking line, 'Fare you well; your suit is cold!'

As he has solemnly pledged himself to abide by this test, the prince is obliged to take immediate leave of Portia, who, not sorry to see him go, expresses a hope that all those of his complexion who come to woo may be no more fortunate than he.

In one of the streets of Venice on the morrow, some gentlemen are conversing about Bassanio's departure, saying they feel sure Lorenzo was not with him, although Shylock searched the vessel for his fugitive daughter and her lover. Then they gleefully describe the Jew's rage on discovering Jessica's flight with his property, mockingly repeating his wild cry of, 'My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter! Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats! Justice! The law! My ducats, and my daughter!' Not only do they jeer at this mixture of exclamations, but describe how Shylock was followed by the rabble of the town while uttering this

wail, and add that his missing daughter and ducats are evidently with Lorenzo, for it is reported the lovers were seen together in a gondola.

A little while later they hint Antonio had better be careful, as the Jew, suspecting he had a share in his daughter's elopement, is determined to take a terrible revenge should not his debt be paid as soon as due. Besides, rumours are afloat of vessels wrecked at sea; news to be cautiously broken to the merchant, who so confidently assured Bassanio as he sailed away, that all would be well, and he need think of nothing save securing Portia's hand!

We now return to Portia's house, where she and Nerissa are preparing for the Prince of Arragon, who is ushered in with a flourish of trumpets. After ascertaining that he understands the conditions, Portia allows him to examine the caskets, and he, too, comments upon the inscriptions ere he decides to open the silver chest, for, having a lively sense of his deserts, he deems himself quite worthy of Portia's hand. But, the lid raised, the over-confident suitor discovers the portrait of an idiot, with a slip of paper stating his chances are gone. He, too, therefore bids Portia farewell, and she comments, 'Thus hath the candle singed the moth,' while her maid vows it is evident that 'Hanging and wiving go by destiny.'

It is at this juncture that a servant announces the coming of a Venetian to try his fate. Little suspecting who is to undergo the test this time, Portia idly wonders who this new suitor may be, while her maid secretly hopes Bassanio may appear.

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ACT III. The third act opens in the streets of Venice, where two of Antonio's friends discuss recent shipwrecks which have caused him severe losses. Their conversation is interrupted by Shylock, of whom they inquire the news, whereupon he reviles them for helping his daughter escape. The Jew seems depressed, not only by the loss of his daughter and ducats, but because the news of Antonio's bad luck makes him fear for his debt. In his wrath, he vows, should the money not be forthcoming, to exact his pound of flesh to feed his revenge, working himself up to the utmost against Antonio, and fiercely demanding whether a Jew has not eyes, hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, and passions, like any other human being? Then he reminds his hearers how if a Jew wrong a Christian, revenge is inevitably sought, adding that he doesn't see why the rule should not work both ways, ere he hisses, "The villainy you teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard, but I will better the instruction!"

The Jew's tirade against Christians is interrupted by the arrival of a servant, begging the gentlemen to join Antonio. When they have departed, a second Jew joins Shylock to report that he has not been able to trace the missing Jessica, although he has heard of her here and there. Shylock thus gathers that he has not only lost his jewels, but his daughter as well, and this being the first loss which has accrued to him, he bitterly vows that 'The curse never fell upon our nation till now!'

In a vain attempt to comfort him, his companion

avers others have suffered even more, Antonio, for instance, having lost all he possessed. Although this news pleases Shylock, he sinks back into the depths of grief on hearing how his daughter is squandering the money she stole. Then, eager to work off his rage in some way, Shylock bids his companion retain an officer to arrest Antonio as soon as the bond comes due, grimly swearing, 'I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit!'

We are next transferred to Portia's house, where she is cordially inviting Bassanio and Gratiano to tarry a month before undergoing the terrible test, for she is too loyal to reveal her father's secret even to the man she loves. Afraid lest some one else may win her, Bassanio refuses to postpone his choice, so preparations are made, and Portia, who has been softly comparing her lover to Hercules, sends him to the caskets, exclaiming, 'Go, Hercules! Live thou, I live: with much more dismay I view the fight than thou that makest the fray.'

While music is played and a song is sung, Bassanio softly comments upon caskets and inscriptions, declaring at last, that although the rest of the world might be deceived by glitter, or ready to commit crimes for the sake of silver, he is inclined to think that the leaden casket, which threatens rather than promises, will be best. As he comes to this conclusion, Portia, in an aside, expresses her ecstasy and watches him open the leaden receptacle, which contains a portrait, over whose beauty he raves, ere he reads the inscription declaring that since he has not

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chosen by view, he has chosen fair and true, and concluding with an injunction to claim his lady with a loving kiss.

Still doubtful that he has won, Bassanio begs Portia to confirm her father's choice in this manner, and as she has fallen in love with this suitor, Portia concedes the favour, ere stating she wishes she were a thousand times more fair and ten thousand times more rich, in order to bestow herself upon him, adding that although merely an unlessoned girl, she is happy in not being too old or too dull to learn, and ready to commit her 'gentle spirit' to his to be directed as by 'her lord, her governor, her king.' Having thus made Bassanio master of herself, her house, and all her possessions, Portia gives him a betrothal ring, warning him never to part with it, lose it, or give it away, lest 'it presage the ruin of your love.' Overjoyed at so complete a surrender, Bassanio swears to part with the ring only with life.

Meantime, Nerissa and Gratiano, having decided that their fate also should rest upon the caskets, reach an understanding and exchange rings, ere they offer congratulations to Bassanio and Portia, and beg permission to be married when they are. This betrothal scene is interrupted by the arrival of Lorenzo, Jessica, and a nobleman from Venice, the latter bringing Bassanio a message. The letter is from Antonio, and the messenger, who delivers it, compassionately warns the recipient it contains bad news. Then, overhearing Gratiano boast that he and Bassanio have won the golden fleece, he sadly

exclaims they have been far more fortunate than Antonio, who has lost all he possessed.

Bassanio, who has meantime perused his missive, shows such a changed countenance, that Portia tenderly insists upon sharing his anxieties. Thereupon he informs her he has just read 'the unpleasant'st words that ever blotted paper,' adding that whereas he told her part of the truth when he stated he was penniless, his condition is even worse, seeing he borrowed the money from Antonio to visit her. Then, after relating the story of the bond, he adds that his friend, having lost all, may be called upon to pay it, for the messenger assures him nothing will satisfy the Jew save the terms of the loan. This statement is confirmed by Jessica, who has overheard her father and his friends confer on this subject.

Then Portia insists that her betrothed hasten to his friend's rescue, using her money to pay the debt, adding when told twenty merchants have vainly interceded, that she is willing to offer much more than the bond. She also insists upon Bassanio's marrying her immediately so he can dispose of her fortune in his friend's behalf, declaring that until his and Gratiano's return, she and Nerissa will live as widows, and tenderly adding, 'Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear,' ere she bids him remember it is a friend's duty to sacrifice all for the sake of his friend.

We now return to Venice, where Shylock, meeting Antonio and his jailor, expresses indignation that a prisoner should have the privilege of walking abroad.

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After fiercely enjoining upon the jailor to look well to his charge, Shylock prepares to depart, refusing to listen to Antonio's entreaties, and vociferating, 'I'll have my bond,' for since he has been called a dog, he is determined to justify the epithet.

When he has gone, a Venetian spectator terms him 'the most impenetrable cur that ever kept with men,' although Antonio insists it is natural Shylock should hate him, seeing he has so often delivered debtors from his clutches. On that account he feels the duke's intercession will not avail, and knows the laws will have to be respected if Venice is to endure. Still, Antonio has undergone such anxiety of late, that he ruefully avers there will hardly be a spare pound of flesh on his body when payment comes due on the morrow; and, although resigned to his fate, he ardently hopes Bassanio will return in time to see him loyally acquit the debt.

We now return to Portia's house, where Lorenzo is complimenting her on her unselfishness in sending off her new-made husband to rescue a friend, although he admits Antonio more than deserves all that Bassanio can do for him. After assuring him she has never yet had cause to repent doing right, and that a bosom friend of her husband must be worthy of all devotion, Portia announces that she and Nerissa are going to retire to a convent to pray for their husbands, leaving him and Jessica in charge of the estate. This trust accepted, Portia privately bids a servant carry a letter to her lawyer-cousin in Padua, bringing his answer to the ferry at Venice, where she will meet him. Then, turning to

the amazed Nerissa, she gleefully announces they will see their unsuspecting husbands ere long!

In reply to Nerissa's inquiry how this may be, Portia next states they are going to assume men's garments, and joyously boasts what a pretty lad she will make, and how cleverly she will play her part. Then, seeing Nerissa still bewildered, but having no time to explain further at present, Portia leaves the apartment with her, promising a full explanation while they travel toward their goal.

When the curtain again rises, we behold Portia's garden, where Jessica is talking to Launcelot, who, after explaining how the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, states her only hope of salvation lies in having married a Christian, although he fears many conversions may raise the price of pork! This scene is interrupted by the arrival of Lorenzo, to whom Jessica gives an amused account of what has just been said, ere Launcelot is bidden prepare supper; but before obeying, this facetious servant exercises his wit upon his temporary master, and proves that words can be used in queer ways. Left alone with his bride, Lorenzo comments on Launcelot, ere he begins to make love, and asks Jessica's opinion of Portia, whom he is pleased to hear her praise. Then, after a little more lover-like conversation, the pair depart for supper.

ACT IV. The fourth act, containing the grandest scene in the play, opens in a court of justice in Venice, where the duke, sitting in state, summons Antonio, and expresses regret he should have fallen into the clutches of so 'stony an adversary.' Duly

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grateful for the duke's efforts to release him, Antonio thanks him, ere stating he knows the bond must be paid. The Jew is next summoned, and the duke asks him whether he has not thought better of his decision, adding he feels sure he has driven things so far, only to show mercy at the last minute. Then, urging the barbarity of the bond, he suggests half the debt be remitted, in consideration of Antonio's great losses, ere he bids Shylock speak, adding warningly, 'We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.'

But Shylock asserts that, having sworn 'to have the due and forfeit of his bond,' nothing save a pound of flesh will satisfy him; he also finds a ready answer to Bassanio's objections, and obstinately refuses to listen to reason or to accept the money offered him. Every word he utters denotes his rankling grudge for the wrongs perpetrated against his race for centuries past, and although Bassanio openly calls him an unfeeling man, he insists that he is justified in his claim.

Seeing the hopelessness of the case, Antonio thinks they might as well 'stand upon the beach and bid the main flood bate his usual height,' as try to change his foe's mind. With a last hope that cupidity may get the better of cruelty, Bassanio offers Shylock twice the amount of the debt, only to be grimly told six times that sum would not tempt him, and that, having bought his pound of flesh, he is entitled to it!

The duke, who has vainly appealed to the Jew's mercy, now declares, unless the doctor from Padua,

who is to decide the case, soon appears, he will have to adjourn it, as he cannot allow things to take such a course. He has barely finished speaking, when the arrival of the Paduan doctor is announced. The duke orders him admitted, and while the messenger goes in quest of the judge, Bassanio tries to cheer Antonio by saying he will force the Jew to take his own 'flesh, blood, bones, and all,' ere he will allow his friend to lose a drop of blood for his sake.

In reply Antonio cries, 'I am a tainted wether of the flock, meetest for death,' adding that ill-luck has so dogged his footsteps, that, having lost all the rest, he is glad life will not be prolonged, and bidding his friend write his epitaph. It is at this juncture that Nerissa, as lawyer's clerk, enters the hall and delivers a letter to the duke. While he examines the seal and peruses this missive, the attention of the spectators is diverted to Shylock, who is whetting his knife on the sole of his shoe in anticipation of putting it soon to use,—doing so with such fiendish delight, that Antonio's friends revile him, Gratiano exclaiming he must have wolf's blood in his veins!

In spite of all they say, Shylock continues his whetting process, until the duke announces that the learned doctor, unable to appear in person, has sent his colleague, who, although young, is nevertheless competent. While an attendant goes out to summon this substitute, the duke orders his clerk to read aloud the letter, ere he greets the Paduan lawyer's representative. This is, of course, Portia, as doctor

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of laws, who gravely states she has come to settle the case, having studied it in detail with her learned colleague. Then, turning gravely to the two principals in the trial, she begins her legal interrogations, charging Shylock to be merciful, in a speech which is justly considered one of the finest passages the poet has left us.

Notwithstanding her eloquence, Shylock maliciously insists on his bond, although Bassanio again offers to pay twice, ten times the amount, and forfeit hands, head, and heart, rather than permit his friend to suffer for his sake. To the horror of all present, save the Jew, Portia announces 'there is no power in Venice can alter a decree established,' a sentence which so delights Shylock that he hails her as a 'Daniel come to judgment!' When she asks to see the bond, he eagerly produces it, insisting upon his pound of flesh, although she again offers money and suggests that mercy is better than justice.

Utterly despairing by this time, Antonio,—who has been long enough on the rack,—demands that his sufferings be ended by an immediate decision, whereupon Portia regretfully bids him prepare for the knife, a decree Shylock receives with an outburst of fiendish joy. Then, while Antonio bares his breast, Portia reads aloud the document stating the pound shall be taken from the spot nearest Antonio's heart, ere she inquires whether balances are ready to weigh the amount, and a surgeon at hand to check the bleeding of the wound? But, although Shylock has carefully prepared knife and scales, he deems a physician superfluous, grimly vowing it was

not 'nominated in the bond,' upon whose fulfilment he insists so frantically.

Deeming his end near, Antonio now bids farewell to Bassanio, saying he is glad to die since he has outlived prosperity, and sending his compliments to Portia, who has so generously but vainly sent her husband to his rescue. He adds that if the Jew only cuts deep enough, all will be over in a moment, and reminds Bassanio he has loved him so truly that he is about to pay his debt with all his heart. Overcome by grief, Bassanio wildly cries that although married to a wife he adores, he would give her, and all he owns to save his friend, a sacrifice the judge gravely reminds him might not please Portia. Unwilling to show less devotion than Bassanio, Gratiano also exclaims he wishes his new-made wife were in heaven, to intercede for Antonio and save him from the Jew, a statement the lawyer's clerk mutters it is well his wife does not overhear! Such friendly devotion, however, seems incomprehensible to Shylock, who once more wishes his daughter had not married a Christian, before he again urges the judge to decide the case.

After going through the usual formula, Portia decrees the rabid Jew shall have his pound of flesh, whereupon Shylock, almost beside himself with revengeful fury, starts forward to claim it. But his advance is checked by the judge gravely warning him that, whereas the flesh is his, he must not shed a single drop of blood, there being a law in Venice to the effect that should a Jew attempt to shed Christian blood, he forfeits his estates! This reminder,

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which almost paralyses Shylock, delights Gratiano; but the incredulous Jew asks sundry questions, until baffled, he sullenly volunteers to accept thrice the amount of his bond, which has been repeatedly offered in exchange for the pound of flesh.

Although Bassanio immediately steps forward with the money, the judge decrees that since Shylock insisted upon strict justice and refused anything save the terms of the bond, nothing else will now be granted him, adding the warning that should he cut more or less than the stipulated amount, he will die and his property be confiscated.

While Gratiano rapturously cries this is indeed a 'Daniel come to judgment,' the Jew grimly proposes to accept the principal of the debt and depart. Even that the judge will not allow Bassanio to pay, declaring that the Jew, having conspired against the life of a fellow-citizen by inducing him to sign such a bond, one-half of his property falls by law to Antonio, and the other half to the state. He adds that Shylock's life also is forfeit unless the duke forgive him, a pardon the Jew hardly heeds, for, hearing his property is gone, he hoarsely bids them take his life!

Portia now inquires whether Antonio is willing to show mercy to the man who showed him none, and notwithstanding Gratiano audibly advises him to give the Jew a halter, Antonio decides Shylock will be sufficiently punished by losing half his property, accepting baptism, lending him sufficient money to trade with, and making a will in behalf of the daughter, who has married a Christian. This decision

satisfies the duke, who bids Shylock submit and recant. Thoroughly cowed, the Jew sullenly promises to obey the court's decree, ere he retires under plea of illness, asking that the paper he is to sign be sent after him.

When the duke invites the wise judge to dine, Portia graciously declines under plea of an immediate return to Padua. This being the case, the duke bids Antonio express his gratitude to his saviour; so when he has left, Bassanio exclaims that he and his friend owe their lives to the learned judge, who is begged to accept, as reward for his trouble, the money he saved from the Jew. Besides, Antonio adds in heartfelt tones that they will ever feel indebted 'over and above, in love and service to you ever more!'

To the surprise of both friends, the judge refuses the money, stating, 'He is well paid that is well satisfied,' and then, being urged to accept a souvenir of the occasion, suddenly demands Antonio's gloves and Bassanio's ring. At this request, Bassanio demurs, under plea the ring is unworthy of the judge's acceptance; but, when their saviour insists, he explains with embarrassment that he cannot part with a token given to him by his wife, who made him vow never to sell, give away, or lose it.

Pretending to consider this a subterfuge to avoid parting with a trifle, the judge leaves the room offended, whereupon Antonio urges his friend to send him the ring, promising to justify such an action to his wife. On that account Bassanio draws Portia's gift from his finger, and bids Gratiano deliver

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it to the departing judge, ere he leaves the court with Antonio, who is to accompany him to Belmont on the morrow.

The curtain next rises on a street in Venice, along which the judge is striding, giving directions to his clerk to discover the Jew's house and make him sign the document which Lorenzo will welcome. They are now overtaken by Gratiano, who humbly begs the judge to accept Bassanio's ring; but, although Portia takes it, she refuses an invitation to dinner, and begs Gratiano to direct her clerk to Shylock's house. Then she watches Nerissa walk off with him, after slyly whispering she, too, is going to win from her husband the token she gave him. Meantime, gleefully stating 'We shall have odd swearing that they did give the rings away to men,' Portia returns to her lodgings, where Nerissa will join her as soon as the document is signed.

ACT V. The fifth act opens in an avenue leading to Portia's house, where Lorenzo and Jessica, strolling by moonlight, talk of lovers and vow they will never forget these evenings. A noise of rapid footsteps interrupts them, and on challenging the newcomer, Lorenzo hears of Portia's return with her maid before morning, as she is merely pausing at the wayside shrines to pray for a happy married life. When the messenger inquires whether news has come from Bassanio, Lorenzo assures him that, although no tidings have been received, he will arrive before long. He and his wife are about to return to the house to welcome the travellers, when Launcelot announces that Bassanio is on his way. After once

more dwelling on the beauty of the starry night, and listening to music which adds charms to the scene, the married lovers are about to leave when Portia and Nerissa appear.

Drawing near, Portia points out the light in her house, saying it 'shines like a good deed in a naughty world,' ere she begins to praise the music. Then, perceiving Launcelot, she eagerly inquires for her husband, and on learning his return has been announced, gives orders for his reception, just as the noise of an arrival is heard, which is soon followed by Bassanio's appearance. After warmly greeting his bride, Bassanio bids her welcome his friend Antonio, to whom he is 'so infinitely bound,' whereat his wife rejoins he is indeed indebted to him, ere she welcomes Antonio to Belmont.

Meantime, Gratiano, too, has embraced his bride, who, discovering the loss of his ring, reproaches him, for he is soon heard vehemently protesting her token was given to the clerk of the lawyer who saved his master's friend from Shylock's clutches. Of course, this dispute attracts Portia's attention, and when she inquires what it means, Gratiano indignantly replies his wife is making a fuss about an insignificant ring! Then Nerissa retorts that, however trifling the value of her token, he should have prized it for association's sake, paying no heed when he insists it was given to 'a little scrubbed boy,' to whom he could not deny the reward he selected.

Thereupon Portia gravely agrees with Nerissa that Gratiano was wrong to part with her keep-

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sake, adding confidently that *her* husband would never have acted thus, a statement which causes Bassanio to mutter beneath his breath it would have been wiser to cut off his hand and swear he lost her ring defending it! But, before he can invent an excuse to account for the absence of his token, Gratiano blurts out, in justification, that he has merely followed the example of Bassanio, who bestowed his keepsake on the judge. As her husband is unable to deny this accusation, Portia gravely vows she will never be his wife until she sees her ring again, and Nerissa follows suit.

Such a decision staggers both husbands, but when Bassanio eagerly claims that if Portia knew to whom he gave the ring, for whom he gave the ring, for what he gave the ring, and how unwillingly he gave the ring, she would surely 'abate the strength' of her displeasure, she mockingly retorts that if he only knew the virtue of the ring, the worthiness of the one who gave it to him, and realised his honour was bound up with it, he would never have parted with such a token! Like Nerissa, she pretends to believe their tokens were bestowed upon women, although Bassanio swears his was given to the judge, eloquently describing how Antonio's saviour, after refusing all pecuniary reward, demanded that only. He adds that honour would not permit ingratitude, and that she herself would have implored him to give it to the doctor had she been present.

Still feigning to be implacable, Portia declares that since the doctor has the ring, Bassanio must

watch her, should that worthy ever visit their house, for whenever he is absent, she intends to spend all her time in the doctor's company. Then Nerissa announces she will do the same with the lawyer's clerk, whereupon both husbands protest, while Antonio expresses regret to be the unhappy cause of such matrimonial differences. When Bassanio humbly begs his wife's forgiveness, swearing never to break faith with her again, Antonio again volunteers to be his bondsman, staking his soul this time, notwithstanding his late terrible experience. Thereupon, Portia, pretending to relent, hands Antonio a ring to place on her husband's hand, bidding him guard it more sacredly than her first token. To his intense surprise, Bassanio recognises in it the token he bestowed upon the judge, and Portia, to tease him, confesses that the judge gave it to her, when she spent last night in his company! At the same time, Nerissa admits having passed hours alone with the lawyer's clerk!

When both husbands exclaim, Portia produces a letter, proving she was the doctor and Nerissa her clerk, calling upon Lorenzo to testify how both wives left the house immediately after their husbands, and returned just before them, having meantime succeeded so well in their undertaking. Then, while Bassanio and Gratiano show relief that their wives have not been as faithless as they seemed, Portia delivers to Antonio some letters which prove that certain of his ships have reached port safely. In her turn, Nerissa produces the document proving that Shylock's wealth will eventually come to

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Lorenzo's wife, who fancied she had forfeited it by marrying a Christian.

Then Portia invites all present into the house where further questions can be answered, and all joyfully follow her, Gratiano solemnly declaring that as long as he lives he will 'fear no other thing so sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring!'

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

INTRODUCTION. The opening scenes of 'The Taming of the Shrew' are often cut out, as the play itself is intelligible without them, the omitted part showing an inn, at the door of which the hostess reproaches Sly for not paying his debts, ere she departs in quest of a constable to arrest him. Too drunk to heed threats, Sly falls asleep near the door, in spite of the noise of an approaching hunting party.

A lord, dashing upon the scene, gives orders to the huntsmen for the care of his hounds, and, suddenly becoming aware of Sly's presence, is seized with a mad desire to play a practical joke upon him. He, therefore, bids his servants pick up the unconscious tinker, giving them elaborate directions to put him to bed in a luxurious chamber, pretending, when he awakes, that he is their beloved master, who has been insane for some time.

The servants, delighted with the idea, remove the unconscious man, just as strolling players arrive and are hired to perform that evening for Sly's benefit. These preparations completed, the lord directs that his page dress up like a lady, to play the part of Sly's wife, using an onion, if necessary, to produce artificial tears!

The next scene is played in the lord's house, where Sly awakens, surrounded by obsequious attendants,

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proffering garments, drink, and food. When the bewildered tinker insists that he never owned more than one suit of clothes at a time, the attendants pity his delusions, and reproach him for not inquiring for his devoted wife, who has mourned his sad state for the past fifteen years. It is while Sly is muttering in surprise, that the page enters, dressed as a lady, and weeping profusely, begins to lavish caresses upon him, while he, in his bewilderment, asks the servants how to address this woman.

Under pretence of preventing Sly's falling back into his sad state of melancholy, a play is now proposed, and it is this 'play within a play' which gives its title to this chapter. Although Sly shows so little appreciation for it that he wishes it were done at the close of the first scene, it has delighted the public for the past three hundred years.

ACT I. The rising curtain reveals the public square in Padua, where Lucentio is telling his servant Tranio he has come here to attend the university, hoping to make good use of the opportunities his father affords him to enlarge his mind. Sent not only to wait upon his young master, but also to watch over him, this servant gives Lucentio the wise advice to vary his studies, working hardest at what he likes best, adding sagely, 'No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en: in brief, sir, study what you most affect.'

They are still talking, while awaiting Lucentio's second servant, when people arrive in the square. The newcomers are Baptista, a rich gentleman, accompanied by his two daughters, Katharine and

Bianca, and the latter's two suitors, Gremio and Hortensio. Drawing aside, master and man comment on what is going on, thus overhearing Baptista's decision to allow Bianca to receive no further attentions until her elder sister has secured a husband; and his intimation that, should either of Bianca's suitors fancy Katharine, he is welcome to her! Neither gentleman, however, seems inclined to avail himself of this privilege, as Katharine is known for a temper so violent that none dare approach her.

Baptista's decision, and the evident reluctance of both men to sue for her hand, drive Katharine to rude remarks, which prove that her reputation for shrewishness is well deserved. This violence also attracts remarks from the eavesdroppers, the servant averring the lady must be mad, while his master opines her manners present a startling contrast to those of her sister, the most attractive woman he has ever seen.

While Lucentio is thus falling in love with Bianca, Baptista informs her he is going to banish her into the house, where she can amuse herself studying, because, as long as she is visible, her sister will never be able to secure a mate. Although Bianca submits without murmur, her lovers protest so vehemently, that her father, who evidently prefers his younger child, offers to sweeten her captivity by supplying her with masters of all kinds, inquiring whether the suitors know of any good teachers in town?

Although Baptista bids Katharine remain behind while he conducts her sister into retirement, this

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contrary damsel follows them both, leaving the two pretenders to procure not only masters for Bianca, but, if possible, a suitor willing to overlook the shrew's temper in consideration of her large dowry.

Hortensio and Gremio having gone, the first-comers resume their interrupted conversation, Lucentio rhapsodising about Bianca until Tranio reminds him of her father's decree. The youth then boldly decides to become master of literature to the lady, his servant personating him, in the meantime, in town. Charmed to play such a part, the man suggests his companion in service can wait upon him, so he and his master immediately change clothes. They have barely done so when the second servant comes on the scene, whereupon Lucentio explains to him that, having killed a man in a duel, he is obliged to hide to avoid punishment, and that, while one of his servants represents him, the other must serve his comrade with all outward respect.

This matter has just been settled when Petruchio and his servant appear, the former remarking he has come to Padua to visit Hortensio, before whose house he now stands. He bids his man knock at the door, using the expressions, 'knock me, rap me,' etc.,—terms the servant is too simple to interpret otherwise than literally, but dares not carry out. Angry at not being obeyed, Petruchio pulls his man's ears, thus attracting Hortensio, who explains the verbal misunderstanding. The servant now drawing aside, the friends converse confidentially, Pe-

truchio revealing that, his father's death having made him a man of means, he has come to Padua to secure a rich wife. On hearing this, Hortensio eagerly suggests he espouse Katharine, warning him loyally that, however rich she may be, she has the reputation of a shrew. Attracted by the lady's large dowry, Petruchio,—who deems himself competent to cope with any woman's temper,—enthusiastically declares he will woo and win her.

The servant, perceiving Petruchio pays no heed to Hortensio's strictures, hints that when his master has once gotten an idea into his head, it can never be dislodged, adding that, having learned Katharine has money, Petruchio will marry her whether or no, and that, being a clever actor, he will doubtless scold harder than she, should occasion arise.

In reply to eager questions, Hortensio gradually reveals who the lady is, and Petruchio, learning their fathers were once friends, feels sure of a good reception. As he is determined not to sleep until he has met the lady whose dowry and temper fascinate him, Hortensio tells him of his love for her sister Bianca, suggesting that in return for the chance of securing so wealthy a bride, Petruchio should introduce him disguised to Baptista, as a master of music, fitted to teach all a lady cares to learn.

It is while they are discussing the details of this scheme that Lucentio comes on the scene, disguised as a master of languages, boastfully assuring Gremio,—whom he has secured as patron,—that he is an adept in his profession. Hoping to win Bianca's favour by providing her with an instructor who will

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also prove a friend at court, Gremio proudly announces he is bound for Baptista's house.

On learning that Petruchio is also going thither to woo Katharine, Gremio is overjoyed, feeling like Hortensio, that the elder sister once out of the way, Bianca can easily be won. It is, therefore, for the sake of disposing of Katharine, that he and Hortensio bury all rivalry for the present, and vie in giving Petruchio instructions, warning him, however, to prepare for the worst.

To all their cautions this bold suitor confidently replies a little noise will not daunt him, as he has heard lions roar, and sea-waves beat against the shore, and that the crash of thunder and the din of battle have so hardened his ears that a woman's tongue has no terrors for him!

They are about to set out for Baptista's house, when overtaken by Lucentio's servant, personating his master, and closely attended by his comrade. The false Lucentio pretends to have come to town to sue for Bianca's hand, and simulates great surprise when informed that he cannot press his suit until her sister is married. When he learns that Gremio and Hortensio are also candidates for her favour, he pettishly demurs; but finally consents to join them in furthering Petruchio's suit, feeling, like the rest, deeply indebted to the man whose wooing of Katharine is their only hope. All, therefore, agree to meet at a banquet that evening, where they will drink to Petruchio's success.

ACT II. The second act opens in Baptista's house, where Bianca, hands bound behind her, is undergo-

ing torture at her sister's hands. Although she is piteously begging to be set free, cruel Katharine vows she shall remain a prisoner until she has confessed which suitor she prefers. Thinking her sister covets the possession of one of these lovers,—and not caring for either,—Bianca shows suspicious readiness to abandon both, and thus so rouses Katharine's anger that she strikes her.

The father, appearing at this moment, chides his eldest daughter, who, instead of taking this reproof to heart, lets her sister escape, while she reviles him for his preference of his youngest child. Then, Katharine flounces out of the room, leaving Baptista alone to lament his ill-fortune at being plagued with such a daughter! His soliloquy is interrupted by the arrival of the suitors, and, no sooner have the usual courtesies been exchanged, than Petruchio makes himself known, declaring that, having heard of the beauty, wit, and affability of Baptista's eldest daughter, he has come to sue for her hand. He adds that, to insure a welcome, he brings a master for Bianca, and then introduces the disguised Hortensio. In his turn, Gremio boasts of the acquirements of his candidate, while the false Lucentio eagerly proffers books and a musical instrument for the use of the young lady whom he, too, hopes to win.

Baptista has just bidden a servant carry away these gifts, and introduce the new masters to his daughters, when Petruchio, as if unable to brook further delay, impetuously exclaims, 'My business asketh haste,' inquiring what dowry Baptista will bestow upon his elder daughter? Anxious to get rid of

troublesome Katharine, Baptista promises to will her one-half of his wealth, giving her immediate possession of twenty thousand crowns,—an amount so alluring to Petruchio that, after stating what he is ready to settle upon his wife, he proposes the immediate signing of a contract. But to this Baptista objects that, before proceeding any further, the lady's favour should be won, a feat Petruchio thinks he can easily perform, being as peremptory as Katharine herself, and fully aware of the fact that a great gust puts out a small fire. When Baptista cautiously endeavours to prepare him for what awaits him, this strange suitor adds the significant statement that he is 'rough and wooes not like a babe,' a boast which he carries out, as you will see.

They are still conversing when Hortensio bursts into the room, holding his hands to his head, for, having attempted to teach Katharine music, he so incensed her, that she brought the new instrument down upon his head, with sufficient force to smash it and cause him pain. The father seems unspeakably shocked at such behaviour, but Petruchio loudly vows such manners inspire him with a still livelier desire to see the lady! Baptista, therefore, goes off in quest of Katharine, taking with him the unfortunate Hortensio, whom he encourages by promising that henceforth he shall instruct Bianca only, whose gentleness is proverbial.

Left alone to await the appearance of the fair Katharine, Petruchio lays his plans, proposing to woo the lady 'with some spirit,' pretending when she scolds that she is singing sweetly, when she



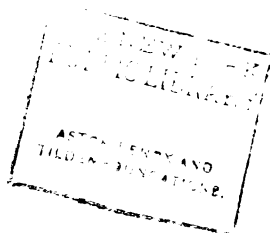
Ed. Gruetzner

PETRUCHIO'S VIOLENCE

Pet. "'Tis burnt; and so is all the meat.

There, take it to you, trenchers, cups, and all:"

Taming of the Shrew, Act 4, Scene 1,



frowns that she is smiling upon him, when she is mute that her loquacity is charming, and vowing that, even should she bid him begone, he will assume she is suggesting the immediate publication of their banns.

No sooner does Katharine appear, therefore, than Petruchio greets her with a familiarity which she resents by making all manner of biting and cutting remarks, all of which he receives in the most amiable fashion. After a spirited interview, wherein Katharine's sharp speeches are answered wittily and wisely, the girl, discovering she cannot otherwise anger this bold suitor, deals him a blow. Although sorely tempted to retort in kind, Petruchio forbears, pressing Katharine to accept him, and declaring that, notwithstanding evil reports, he finds her gentle and loving. He adds that he is determined she shall marry him and no one else, and cautions her not to contradict any statement he makes when her father returns.

A moment later, when Baptista appears with Gremio and the false Lucentio, Petruchio swaggeringly declares it was impossible he should not speed in his wooing, although the wrathful Katharine denies giving her consent, and reviles her father for expecting her to accept a madman. None of her stinging remarks disturb Petruchio, who coolly announces that, having found Katharine an epitome of all virtues, he will marry her Sunday next; assuring Baptista, when she contradicts him, that she does so merely to appear coy, having been most tractable when they were alone together! Paying no further

heed to her denials, therefore, he says he will go to Venice to procure wedding garments, and, after bidding Baptista prepare a feast, takes courteous leave of the sullen girl, who turns her back upon him.

When Katharine and Petruchio have left the stage in opposite directions, Gremio and the false Lucentio wonder aloud how any one dare woo so thorny a bride, and marvel at the speed with which this match has been concluded; while Baptista openly congratulates himself upon disposing of a daughter, so troublesome that he never expected to find a mate for her.

The matter of Katharine's marriage settled, both suitors deem the time has come to urge their claims to Bianca's hand, Gremio stating that, as an old man, he will make the better husband, while Lucentio pleads his youth as an advantage. When Baptista answers by announcing he will bestow his youngest daughter upon the suitor who can offer most, both begin to enumerate their possessions, eagerly trying to outbid one another. The offers of the false Lucentio finally so far surpass those of Gremio, that Baptista promises to favour him, provided his father comes to Padua to approve the match. He does not, however, doubt that this consent will be forthcoming, for he announces that, whereas Katharine will be married on the following Sunday, Bianca shall be awarded to her successful lover on the next.

Baptista having gone, Gremio and his rival exchange taunts, and it is only when left quite alone on the stage, that the false Lucentio ruefully wonders how he can procure a false father to act as

his sponsor, seeing he dare not appeal to the real Vincentio.

ACT III. The third act begins in Baptista's house, where Bianca is sitting with her masters, both of whom are eagerly striving to monopolise her attention. In their anxiety to win her favour, they prove extremely rude to one another, for when Hortensio insists that music comes first, Lucentio retorts it should only be considered as refreshment after serious study. The young lady, evidently greatly taken by Lucentio, now invites him to help her construe Latin, directing Hortensio meanwhile to tune his instrument, so as to give her a music lesson later on.

Taking advantage of his position as Latin teacher, Lucentio construes two lines from Ovid to signify that he, Lucentio, has come hither in disguise, merely to win Bianca's favour, while his servant sues with her father in his name. He has barely gotten thus far in a declaration to which Bianca listens with praiseworthy attention, when he is interrupted by Hortensio, who pronounces his instrument in perfect tune. Wishing to learn more about this interesting Latin lesson, Bianca pretends to discover a discord and sends the musician away to retune his instrument, while she, in her turn, construes the same Latin sentence to signify that, not knowing who her new suitor may be, she dares not trust him; still he need not despair.

The musician drawing near again, Lucentio, apparently satisfied for the present, allows his rival to instruct Bianca in his turn. But, although Hor-

tensio, too, makes use of his art to further his suit, Bianca proves strangely inattentive, finds fault with his method, and gladly leaves the room when summoned away by a servant. Finding no attraction in the room when Bianca is not present, the true Lucentio departs, leaving his rival alone on the stage, to express dark suspicions of the strange master who has so quickly captivated his fair pupil's attention.

The next scene is played in front of Baptista's house, where the wedding party vainly await the bridegroom, due long before. Baptista is explaining to the false Lucentio that Katharine's wedding would have been concluded earlier in the day, had it not been for Petruchio's absence, which makes them appear ridiculous. His remarks so enkindle Katharine's smouldering wrath, that she suddenly declares the man who 'wooed in haste' evidently 'means to wed at leisure,' and rushes off the stage in tears. Anxious to see her safely married, Tranio warmly protests that Petruchio is honest, although he cannot but agree when Baptista remarks that, for once, Katharine's outburst of rage is justifiable, seeing 'such an injury would vex a very saint!'

It is while the men are standing there idly, that Lucentio's second servant bursts in, announcing Petruchio is coming, attired in disreputable garments, riding a nag whose saddle and bridle are held together with strings, and attended by a servant gotten up in similar poverty-stricken style. The wedding guests are commenting upon this strange be-

haviour, when Petruchio marches in, well pleased with himself, and calling loudly for his bride. Dreading the effect of such an appearance upon Katharine's temper, Baptista vainly tries to induce him to don more seemly apparel; but Petruchio insists that the lady is to marry him and not his clothes, adding that he is so eager to embrace her, that he can brook no further delay. He, therefore, passes off the stage, escorted by the other wedding guests, only the true and false Lucentios remaining face to face.

This being their first private interview since settling their programme, the servant hastens to report how he has played his master's part, announcing at the end that a false father will have to be found to vouch for the false son. On his part, Lucentio admits that, were it not for the fact his fellow-instructor watches Bianca so closely, he would try to run away with her, knowing that once married, he could hold her 'despite of all the world.'

Master and servant are still discussing how to outwit Bianca's father and suitors, when Gremio returns from church, exclaiming over the wedding. He avers that, although the bride is noted for a shrewish temper, she is nothing but 'a lamb, a dove, a fool,' in comparison with the bridegroom; supporting his statement by a lively account of the manner in which Petruchio knocked down the priest, stamped, swore, called for wine, flung the pieces of toast floating upon it into the sexton's face, and wound up his unseemly proceedings by giving his

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new-made wife such a resounding smack, that it could be heard throughout the church!

This account of the wedding is just finished, when music heralds the bridal procession, Petruchio proudly leading Katharine, and graciously thanking his friends for honouring their wedding banquet, which, alas, neither of them can attend. On hearing that he and his bride must depart immediately, Baptista, the guests, and even Katharine, try to persuade Petruchio to change his mind. But he parries all their entreaties, until, irritated by his refusal, his bride announces her intention to remain. After replying to this speech by a firm yet calm statement of his rights, Petruchio shows plainly he means to enforce them, for, after again bidding his friends enjoy the banquet without them, he calls upon his servant to help rescue his mistress from the hands of importunate friends, loath to part with her!

While Petruchio thus sweeps the bewildered Katharine away, the guests wonder how so mad a marriage will turn out, even the gentle Bianca remarking that, 'being mad herself, she's madly mated!' Then, all follow Baptista into the house, where they are invited to partake of the banquet, of which Bianca and the false Lucentio are to do the honours in place of the absent bride and groom.

ACT IV. The fourth act opens in Petruchio's house, where his servant has arrived cold, wet, and weary, and is loudly calling for help to build fires and prepare for the bridal couple. In conversation

with a fellow-servant, this man gives a lively description of the homeward journey, including his mistress's tumble from her horse in a muddy spot in the road, and vows that, instead of helping Katharine rise, Petruchio, pretending to blame him for the fall, began to beat him, desisting only when the bride held his hand! On hearing this, the second servant sagely concludes that his master is even more shrewish than the new mistress, whose fame has come to his ears.

All the servants are just receiving instructions in regard to their behaviour towards the newly married couple, when Petruchio marches in, gallantly leading Katharine, yet scolding vehemently at his reception. His servants rush forward with apologies, but are shortly dismissed, and it is only after humming a little tune, that Petruchio seems to remember the presence of his bride. With exaggerated courtesy, he now bids her welcome, calls for servants to remove his boots and bring water, treating them so roughly, however, that Katharine is again obliged to interfere. Supper being served, Petruchio escorts his wife to table, but soon after sitting down, angrily declares nothing is fit to set before her, and throws all the viands on the floor. In spite of Katharine's entreaties, he rages on, and on, vowing at last that they will go to bed fasting, seeing there is nothing they can eat! The bridal couple having left the apartment, Petruchio's servants comment upon his strange behaviour, one of them slyly averring the bridegroom evidently intends to kill the bride 'in her own humour.' Then

another servant joins them, gleefully reporting how Petruchio is continuing his angry fuss in his wife's bedroom, where he finds nothing suitable for her use, and is storming until she knows not 'which way to stand, to look, to speak!'

The servants vanish when Petruchio reappears, pleased with what he has done, and mischievously announcing that, although he knows his wife is hungry, he is going to treat her like a hunting falcon, and starve her into submission. He also means to prevent her from sleeping, under the pretext of looking after her comfort, declaring that his plan to tame the shrew consists in killing her with kindness.

The curtain next rises showing Baptista's house in Padua, where the false Lucentio and Hortensio are discussing Bianca's evident infatuation for her new teacher. While they are thus talking, Bianca and her language master stroll upon the scene, and the latter is overheard sentimentally declaring that the only art he professes is love! The suitors in the background are amazed by this revelation, Hortensio, in his chagrin, revealing for the first time that he is a gentleman, disguised as a teacher in hopes of winning the fickle lady's affections. Both he and the false Lucentio now conclude their chances are gone, a fact made patent by the actions of Bianca and of the real Lucentio, in one corner of the stage. Hortensio, therefore, decides to resign his office as teacher, and marry a wealthy widow who has long sought his affections.

When Hortensio has gone, the false Lucentio,

turning to the lovers, announces this decision, twitting Bianca with losing a good chance, ere the lovers leave the scene. Just then the servant comes to inform his pretended master that, after long search, he has discovered a man to personate his father, and satisfy Baptista by consenting to his marriage. The man thus selected to play the part of Vincentio is a Pedant, weary from a long journey, who is no sooner introduced to the false Lucentio, than the latter craftily inquires whether he has heard that all travellers coming from Mantua are to be put to death? This news terrifies the stranger, to whom Lucentio graciously promises his protection, provided he will personate Vincentio and signify his consent to his nuptials. Under such circumstances the Pedant dares, of course, not refuse, and soon departs with his protector to assume the disguise which will enable him to play a father's part.

The next scene is transferred to a room in Petruchio's house, where hungry Katharine is piteously imploring a servant to bring her something to eat, adding pathetically that even beggars were never turned away hungry from her father's door. Faint from lack of food, and giddy from want of sleep,—for Petruchio still pretends no meat or couch is worthy of her,—she hopes to procure a little sustenance surreptitiously. The malicious servant, after playing upon her feelings by proposing one dish after another,—which she no sooner implores him to serve, than he begins to demur,—finally refuses to bring her anything, for fear of incurring his master's displeasure; until, exasperated by these

tantalising offers and subsequent refusals, Katharine finally loses patience and beats him!

The man has gone off to nurse his bruises, when Petruchio comes in with Hortensio, bearing a dish of meat, which he has dressed himself to make sure it will suit his beloved bride. Katharine, sulking at one side of the stage, pays no attention to him, and vouchsafes no response to his lavish expressions of affection and devotion. Perceiving this, Petruchio assumes she scorns the food he has prepared for her; so he is about to order it removed, when she forces herself to utter a reluctant 'thank you,' as reward for his pains. The lady also allows him to lead her to the table, where, while they take their places Petruchio whispers to Hortensio to eat as fast and as much as possible, as Katharine is not to get more than a taste of the meal. With elaborate courtesy, he then serves his wife an infinitesimal portion, interfering so cleverly with every mouthful she eats, that, long before her hunger is appeased, the table is cleared, and he is loudly calling for the merchants from whom he has ordered rich garments for his bride.

Two dealers now enter and begin displaying hats and gowns, which Petruchio decries, but which his wife admires, finally becoming so anxious to possess them, that she tries to silence Petruchio by threatening to fly into a rage unless he cease annoying her by constant interference in women's affairs! Pretending her anger is fully justified by the unsuitability of the garments offered, Petruchio rudely dismisses the merchants, whisper-

ing to Hortensio to follow and indemnify them for their pains.

Left alone with his friend and wife, Petruchio now proposes a visit to her father, stating they can easily reach Padua by dinner-time. But, still angry, Katharine tartly retorts that they will hardly arrive for supper, thus making Petruchio swear that he will never start at all unless she agrees with instead of constantly contradicting him!

The next scene is played before Baptista's house, where the false Lucentio appears with the Pedant, now personating his father, Vincentio. A servant soon reports that Baptista, hearing of their coming, welcomes them heartily, a welcome confirmed a moment later by Baptista, himself, accompanied by his daughter's master of languages.

After greeting the false father warmly, Baptista receives a formal consent to the young couple's union, the parent of the bridegroom regretting not to be able to grace the ceremony. Under plea of immediate departure, he urges the signing of the contract, in his son's lodgings, since Baptista refuses to do so in his own house lest the other suitors make trouble. Baptista, therefore, agrees to accompany father and son, bidding the language teacher follow promptly with his fair pupil.

All the others having left the scene, the real Lucentio and his second servant decide that, for fear of discovery, Bianca's marriage must soon take place. The servant is, therefore, sent to engage the services of a priest, while Lucentio goes off to persuade Bianca to marry him on her way to join her father.

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The following scene is played upon a public highway, where Petruchio is riding with Katharine, who, for the sake of visiting her father, has been humouring her difficult husband. Although Petruchio makes sundry ridiculous tests of her new-born pliancy, and threatens to return home every time she shows the slightest contumacy, she is so weary of his continual outbursts of uncontrolled anger, that she agrees to all he says, even when he takes sly pleasure in making her contradict herself almost in a breath. This makes the listening Hortensio finally exclaim in triumph, 'the field is won!'

They do not proceed very far ere encountering Lucentio's real father, on his way to Padua to visit his son. When Petruchio informs him that his only son is about to marry Katharine's sister, Vincentio asks many questions, while Hortensio, following in their wake, decides to espouse the widow without further delay, Petruchio having taught him not to fear a woman's tongue.

ACT V. The fifth act begins in Padua, before Lucentio's house, where Gremio stands wondering what is going on within. While he is cogitating thus, Lucentio and Bianca slip past him, guided by the servant, who says the priest awaits them at the altar. Gremio is just commenting on the master's strange absence, when Petruchio and his party halt to point out to Vincentio his son's abode, advising him to knock hard should he wish admittance.

After repeated knocking, Gremio informs the stranger the people within are too busy to attend

to him, whereupon Vincentio knocks so peremptorily that the Pedant, from a window, demands the meaning of this unseemly noise? False and true fathers now enter into a ridiculous dialogue, neither having the remotest idea of the identity of the other. In a reply to an inquiry for Lucentio, the false father states that, although at home, he is not at liberty, adding grandiloquently, when it is hinted how lads are always glad to admit fathers bringing money, that, being Lucentio's father himself, no one else shall supply him with funds! This statement naturally causes Petruchio to consider the traveller an impostor, whom he is about to have arrested, when Lucentio's second servant runs up, exclaiming the young people are safe in church!

On coming suddenly face to face with his old master, this man, hoping to prevent the premature discovery of his young master's plans, decides to deny ever having seen Vincentio before. Indignant at what seems wanton impudence, Vincentio beats him, so that, after loudly calling for help, the man runs away, Katharine and Petruchio watching from the background.

The clamour at the door brings out the false Lucentio, hotly demanding who dares beat his man? He, too, is amazed to find himself face to face with Vincentio, who, perceiving him tricked out in his son's clothes, suspects foul play. This servant, too, denies him, and Vincentio, learning that his son's father has been in Padua consenting to his wedding, wails so loudly for Lucentio, that the false bearer of that name summons an officer. Just as this man

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is about to lead the prisoner away Gremio establishes his identity.

It is at that moment that the newly made bride and groom appear, and the old father, overjoyed to find his son safe and sound, embraces him rapturously, while Bianca falls at Baptista's feet, hysterically begging his pardon. Unable to understand what this means, Baptista wonders who the stranger may be who accompanies his daughter? The whole tangle is now unravelled, Lucentio proved the only rightful bearer of the name, and the man about to be arrested his beloved father. The marriage to Bianca is confessed, the bridegroom sagely declaring that 'Love wrought these miracles!' and exhorting servants and Pedant.

Justly indignant at having been gulled, both fathers leave the stage in anger, but Lucentio comforts his bride with the assurance that ere long the irascible old gentlemen will be appeased. His hopes blasted by Bianca's marriage, Gremio wisely concludes to enjoy the wedding banquet, the only compensation offered for his disappointment.

Next, Katharine and Petruchio, silent witnesses to all that has transpired, prepare to follow the rest into the house to partake of the wedding banquet. But first Petruchio demands a kiss, which his obedient wife bestows after slight demur, although still on the public street.

The last scene is played in Lucentio's house, where the guests are partaking of the banquet, and the bridegroom's speech meets with general approval. As the feast progresses, the widow whom Hortensio

married, begins a battle of words with Katharine which is greatly enjoyed by their respective friends. Bianca ends it, however, by rising and going away the ladies, leaving the gentlemen to continue the verbal encounter. In the course of this conversation, the three bridegrooms challenge each other to test their wives' obedience, agreeing after demur that their wager be fixed at one hundred crowns, and that each husband send for his wife in turn, the one obtaining the promptest obedience pocketing the stakes. These preliminaries over, Lucentio bids a servant summon Bianca, so that he may hear the man report a moment later that his mistress is busy and cannot come; a message which causes Petruchio and Hortensio to ridicule his friend, whose wife is not as tractable as he would be led.

Then Hortensio sends the same servant to entreat his wife to join him, but although he uses so dramatic a phrase, the former widow sends back to him that he must be jesting, and that if he wants her, he must come to her! After a few jeers at his distorted companions, Petruchio roughly bids the servant command his wife's immediate presence, and although the others loudly aver Katharine will never submit to such tyranny, he seems confident of success. His confidence is not misplaced, for, almost immediately, Katharine runs into the room, entering submissively, 'What is your will, sir, that I may do for me?'

Then Petruchio bids her go in quest of the two other wives, bringing them down by force if

need be, since they know not their duty to their husbands. She has barely vanished to carry out these lordly commands, when Lucentio and Hortensio express surprise over the transformation effected in Katharine's temper, which Petruchio proudly avers, bodes 'peace, and love, and quiet life.'

Baptista, silent witness of all that has gone on, now declares Petruchio has honourably won his wager, adding he is so overjoyed at the change in his once shrewish daughter, that he will double her dowry. This promise affords Petruchio such satisfaction that he offers to win the wager more fairly still, by giving his friends another proof of his wife's subjection.

He does so when Katharine returns with Bianca and the widow, by greeting her with the remark that her cap is unbecoming, bidding her pluck it from her head, and trample it under foot. While Katharine unhesitatingly obeys, Bianca and the widow angrily chide their husbands for making foolish tests of their obedience, tests which the gentlemen ruefully confess have cost them dear!

Turning to Katharine, Petruchio then bids her lecture these rebellious wives on their duties to their husbands, so, after chiding them, Katharine gravely informs them a woman's duty consists in implicit obedience, adding, 'Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper.' Then she eloquently describes the perils and fatigues husbands are obliged to undergo to earn sustenance for their wives, adding that, in

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return for such sacrifices and devotion, they should meet with love and subjection at home.

Her speech is so complete a vindication of Petruchio's proud boast that he has tamed the shrew, that he delightedly bids her come and kiss him, the play concluding with his remark to his friends, 'Twas I won the wager, though you hit the white; and, being a winner, God give you good-night!'

TWELFTH NIGHT; OR, WHAT YOU WILL

ACT I. The play opens in a palace in Illyria, where the Duke and his court are listening to a concert, of which one song particularly appeals to the august listener, who is in love. When the music ceases and the courtiers inquire whether their master will hunt, the Duke, still full of his own idea, sentimentally compares himself to Actæon, who fell in love with Diana, saying his desires for the Countess Olivia pursue him as cruelly as the hounds did that mythical swain.

It is at this moment that his messenger returns, reporting his lady-love has decided to remain in seclusion for seven years, so as to mourn the death of her beloved brother. On hearing that Olivia intends not to appear unveiled during this period, the Duke exclaims that a woman displaying such affection for a brother would prove indeed a devoted wife!

We are next transported to the seashore, where shipwrecked Viola is questioning her rescuer in regard to the coast upon which she has been cast, and the likelihood of her twin brother's escape from the waves. To quiet her apprehensions, the seaman describes how Sebastian lashed himself to a mast and

drifted safely out of sight,—tidings so welcome that Viola gives him a reward.

In answer to further questions, she learns that Illyria is ruled by Duke Orsino, a friend of her father, still unmarried, although he has long wooed Countess Olivia, whose refusal to wed on account of a brother's loss touches Viola. At first the shipwrecked maiden expresses a desire to enter the Countess' service, but Olivia's vow making that impossible, she decides, instead, to assume the guise of a page and serve the Duke. She, therefore, bids the seaman procure her an outfit and introduction, sure that her many accomplishments will find favour. So thoroughly does the mariner approve of this plan, that he not only promises to guard Viola's secret, but leads her away to prepare for her venture.

We are now transferred to Olivia's house, where the Maid is taking to task this lady's uncle, Sir Toby, for coming home late at night and for drinking. Although Sir Toby vehemently protests, the Maid declares such courses will injure him, adding that the foolish knight he recently introduced to her mistress is worse than himself. This Sir Toby denies, claiming Sir Andrew is a musician and linguist as well as a man of means, and when the Maid tartly retorts that his advantages are more than counterbalanced by his dissipated habits, he painstakingly explains his friend is drunk because he too frequently toasts his lovely niece!

The suitor in question now appears and is rapturously greeted by Sir Toby, but his wits are so

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clouded that he fails to understand his hint to conciliate the Maid. She therefore pertly remarks, when he finally offers her his hand, that there is nothing in it; thereby showing a gratuity would have been far more acceptable than tardy condescension.

The Maid having gone, the men converse, Sir Andrew coming to the conclusion that his slow comprehension is due not to strong drink, but to a too great indulgence in meat. When he hears, therefore, that Olivia is withdrawing from the world, he wishes to return home immediately, but Sir Toby induces him to remain a little longer and exhibit his talents as a dancer, as he may thereby perchance win the Countess' affections.

The next scene is played in the Duke's palace, where the page Cesario,—Viola in disguise,—is talking to a courtier, who warns him that, although he has gained great influence at court in three days' time, he must not count upon the continuance of such favour. This warning has barely been acknowledged by Cesario, when the Duke appears, calling for his page. When Cesario steps forward, the rest are bidden retire, and the Duke proceeds to instruct the youth,—who has already become his confidant,—to visit Olivia, not returning until he has been admitted to plead his master's cause.

When Cesario timidly objects that the lady admits no one, the Duke urges him to make use of his almost womanly tact to further his master's suit, promising to make his fortune, should he succeed. Thus admonished, Cesario volunteers to do his best,

exclaiming in an aside, however, that this will prove a hard task, as 'Whoe'er I woo, myself would be his wife.'

When the curtain again rises, we see a room in Olivia's house where her Maid and Clown are conversing, the former receiving ridiculous replies to all her questions. Exasperated by the Clown's evasions, the Maid finally bids him prepare a suitable excuse, saying his irate mistress will soon appear. Thus warned, the Clown tries to collect his scattered wits, coming to the conclusion that it is better to be 'a witty fool than a foolish wit,' just as Olivia enters with her steward, Malvolio. The mistress shows her displeasure by immediately ordering the Clown removed, whereupon, pretending to misunderstand her, he makes witty speeches, offering at last to demonstrate she is the 'fool' she calls him, provided she will answer a few questions. Olivia expressing willingness to do so, the Clown makes her confess she is mourning the death of a brother, whose soul she indignantly declares is in heaven when the Fool opines that it must be in hell. On hearing this, the Clown promptly retorts that none but a fool would mourn because a relative enjoyed heavenly bliss! Olivia's admiration for this clever deduction irritates Malvolio, who contemptuously exclaims he cannot see how she can put up with such a rascal, a remark savouring so strongly of conceit, that his mistress vows he is so 'sick of self-love,' that he cannot bear to hear any one else praised!

It is at this juncture that the maid reappears, an-

nouncing that some one is asking for the Countess. On hearing that a handsome youth is at the door, Olivia charges Malvolio to report her sick or not at home, as she is determined not to receive any more messages from the Duke. It is while Olivia is reproving the Clown for some mischief, that her uncle passes across the scene, too tipsy to answer her questions properly, so, after he has gone, Olivia makes the Clown define 'drunken man,' praising his definition as apt ere she dismisses him.

Then Malvolio returns reporting that the youth is so determined to speak to the Countess that he has found a witty retort to all excuses,—retorts which so arouse Olivia's curiosity that she soon orders him admitted. While Malvolio goes out to fetch the page, the maid shrouds her mistress in the folds of a thick veil, so when Cesario is ushered in he is confronted by a veiled lady. Told to make his errand known, Cesario begins a set speech, interrupting himself at the end of a few moments to inquire whether he is addressing the right person? In reply to Olivia's query whence he comes, Cesario urges that is not part of his discourse, although he denies being the 'comedian' Olivia calls him. He admits, however, that he is not what he seems, so Olivia, caring naught for his speech, ruthlessly interrupts his glib sentences.

In fact, his appearance so charms her that she finally grants him a private audience, although she pays no heed when he tries to tell her that the text of his discourse lies in the Duke's bosom. A little later, when the page begs for a glimpse of her face,

Olivia cannot refrain from showing the youth,—with whom she has fallen in love,—how beautiful she is. She, therefore, raises her veil, assuring Cesario that the colours he sees are fast, and her beauty ingrain. But, when the page exclaims that so lovely a woman should not go down to her grave without leaving children to perpetuate her beauty, she is secretly pleased, although she disdainfully says her charms could easily be inventoried as ‘two lips, indifferent red,’ ‘two grey eyes, with lids to them,’ ‘one neck, one chin, and so forth.’

In reply to Olivia’s question how the Duke shows his affection for her, the page replies, ‘With adorations, fertile tears, with groans that thunder love, with sighs of fire,’—words which evidently fail to impress Olivia, as she coldly states she never will return his affections. Thereupon the gallant page retorts that were he in his master’s place he would accept no dismissal, but, camping before her gates, would call her name day and night until he wearied her into acceptance! Unable to restrain amusement and curiosity, Olivia again inquires who Cesario may be, only to receive the ambiguous reply that, although of gentle birth, his parentage is above his present fortunes. Again told to report to his master that his wooing is vain, the page finally takes leave of Olivia, saying, ‘Farewell, fair cruelty.’

After Cesario has gone, Olivia admits she has allowed his perfections to creep in at her eyes; then, feeling anxious to see more of him, she bids Malvolio run after him, taking a diamond ring she pretends he left behind him, but with which she hopes

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to bribe Cesario to visit her once more. The steward having departed to execute this commission, Olivia marvels at herself, concluding Fate will have to decide her lot, since she herself knows not what to do.

ACT II. The second act opens on the seashore, where a seaman, Antonio, is inquiring of Sebastian, Viola's twin brother, whether he wishes to be accompanied further? Afraid lest the ill-fortune which has lately dogged his steps should injure his rescuer should they remain together, Sebastian takes leave of the seaman, after describing the loss of his sister, who resembled him so closely that they differed in naught save garments and sex. Sebastian's intention is to present himself before the Duke, whom Antonio wishes to avoid, as he once boarded a ducal vessel.

Cesario is trudging along the street on his way back to the palace; when he is overtaken by Malvolio, asking whether he has not recently been with the Countess? The page admitting this, Malvolio delivers ring and message, only to have the jewel rejected. His orders being explicit, however, the steward sternly places the ring on the ground, vowing unless the page picks it up it will become the prey of any finder!

When Malvolio has gone, Cesario shrewdly argues that Olivia has fallen in love with him, and is trying to bribe him with this gift. Although he regrets being his master's rival in the lady's affections, he ascribes this conquest to his resemblance to his handsome brother, concluding, 'O time! thou must un-

tangle this, not I; it is too hard a knot for me to untie!'

We now return to Olivia's house, where Sir Toby and Sir Andrew are drinking, having come to the sage conclusion that by sitting up until after midnight, they will keep early hours! Their conversation is interrupted by the Clown, whose nonsensical talk enlivens them, and who finally favours them with a song of his own composition, wherein the line, 'Journeys end in lovers meeting,' is often quoted.

The noise made by the drinkers so annoys the Maid that she soon bounces in, saying the steward will turn them all out unless they are quieter. This warning is hailed with such a clamour that Malvolio does appear, sternly requesting them to show more respect for his mistress, but, instead of silencing the tipplers, his strictures excite them to mirth, and they swear to take their revenge when he leaves them.

On hearing them propose to send Malvolio a challenge, the Maid suggests a better scheme, so all agree to send him letters, purporting to have been written by the Countess herself, and all tending to flatter his overweening vanity. This plan having won general approval, the Maid volunteers to prepare the letters, as she can best imitate her mistress's handwriting.

The Duke is again in his palace, calling for the song which pleased him the night before, which Cesario strums on his instrument, while awaiting the arrival of the singer. Meantime, the master inquires whether his page has ever been in love, assuming that unless he had experienced this tender

passion he could not so readily sympathise with his woes.

On seeking to discover the object of his page's affections, the Duke obtains an artful description of himself. Learning, therefore, that Cesario is hopelessly enamoured of a person of his own age, the Duke exclaims such a sweetheart is far too old for him, and advises him to select some younger person, because, 'Women are as roses, whose fair flower being once display'd, doth fall that very hour.'

The entrance of the singer interrupts this talk, but after he has rendered the song and received his reward, the Duke bids Cesario hasten back to Lady Olivia, to tell her that, however large her fortune may be, it has never attracted him. When the page objects that the Countess refuses to listen, the Duke insists upon his obtaining a more favourable answer, exclaiming, when Cesario suggests some one may love him as dearly and as vainly as he does Olivia, that no woman could ever feel such passion as fills his heart!

Then Cesario gravely assures him that his father once had a daughter, who could love as deeply as any man, adding, when the Duke asks what befell her, that 'She never told her love, but let concealment, like a worm i' the bud, feed on her damask cheek; she pined in thought, and with a green and yellow melancholy she sat like patience on a monument, smiling at grief.'

When the Duke wonders whether this faithful lady finally died of love, the page gives the ambiguous reply, 'I am all the daughters of my father's

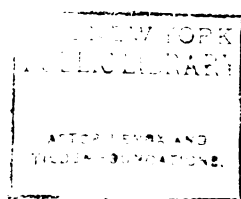


H. Hoffmann

MALVOLIO REBUKES THE REVELLERS

Mal. "My masters, are you mad? or what are you? Have you
no wit, manners, nor honesty,—"

elfth Night. Act 2, Scene 3,



and all the brothers, too,' ere asking what his master wishes him to carry. This ready service so pleases the Duke, that he sends him forth with kindly words, bidding him bear the jewel to the obdurate Countess.

Now behold Olivia's garden, where Sir Toby, Andrew, and their friend Fabian, are discussing what they are planning to play upon Malvolio.

While they are still talking, the Maid rushes in to tell them that their letters are taking effect, and that she has seen Malvolio practising attitudes for the last half hour. She also reports that he is now on his way to the garden, where she drops her last hint which is to complete their work.

The Maid has vanished, and the three men are hidden behind bushes, when Malvolio strolls in, and talks to himself in conceited fashion. This is accompanied by mocking comments from the other trio, who laugh when he talks of becoming Countess, and fatuously dreams of the time when she will be won, and when, master of all her passions, he will be able to call her kinsman to account for his drunken ways!

While complacently dwelling on such dreams of bliss, that Malvolio suddenly finds the letters decocted to mislead him. Deeming both the letters and seal those of the Countess, Malvolio, instead of a running accompaniment of jeers, takes his missive aloud, gravely deciding to carry out its instructions, for he is told therein, 'Be patient of greatness; some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust

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upon 'em!' It is only when Malvolio has gone, that the spectators reappear, delighted with the sport they have had, and congratulating the Maid on the success of her trick.

ACT III. The third act opens in Olivia's garden, where Cesario and the Clown are entertaining one another with conversation and music. After obtaining a tip from the visitor, the Clown so fervently hopes he may soon have a beard, that Viola, who longs to call the bearded Duke her own, bestows upon him a second coin. The page is too wary, however, to allow the Clown to trick him into a third donation, commenting, after he has gone away, that a Fool's office is hardly enviable, seeing he must so closely 'observe their mood upon whom he jests.'

Cesario's soliloquy is interrupted by the arrival of Sir Toby and Sir Andrew, who, after exchanging greetings with him, report that Olivia awaits him. It is just as Cesario is about to obey these summons, that this lady comes into the garden with her maid, and the grace of the page's address so disconcerts Sir Andrew that he becomes madly jealous. After dismissing all the rest, Olivia questions Cesario, bidding him drop complimentary phrases when he styles himself her servant. Thereupon the witty page immediately retorts that, his master being her lover and slave, his servants are hers, too,—a statement Olivia begs him never to repeat, hinting that, although she does not care for his master, she might lend a more favourable ear, should he urge some other suit. It is while Cesario is reproaching

Olivia for wasting affections on an unworthy object, that a striking clock reminds her of the passing of time, so, after wringing from her visitor a second admission that he is not what he seems, Olivia makes him a declaration of love. The embarrassed page thereupon replies that he has no affections to give her, vowing he will never again plead his master's vain cause—an announcement which fills Olivia's heart with dismay, as she fears he will cease to visit her. To insure seeing him again she, therefore, mendaciously intimates that, if he persevere, his master may succeed in the end.

In the next scene Sir Andrew is just informing Sir Toby and Fabian that, having seen Olivia show greater favour to a page than to himself, he feels obliged to depart. Both his friends, however, persuade him that the lady is trying to rouse his jealousy, and thus egg him on to fight the objectionable Cesario. While Sir Andrew goes off to write a challenge, Sir Toby gloats over the amusement they are going to derive from a duel between a man of no courage at all and a page anything but brave.

Just then the Maid rushes in, bidding them follow if they wish to see Malvolio carrying out the ridiculous instructions contained in her last letter. Not willing to lose any of the diversion awaiting them, Sir Toby and Fabian eagerly obey her summons.

In a street in Illyria, we see Sebastian, Viola's twin, and his faithful henchman and rescuer, Antonio, and overhear the former chiding this sailor for following him. To this reproach Antonio pleads guilty, saying he dares not let his young friend ven-

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ture alone among so rough and inhospitable a people. After thanking Antonio warmly for such devotion, Sebastian proposes they view together the curiosities of the town, an invitation the sailor declines, deeming it best not to be seen abroad lest he be recognised and arrested. He, therefore, proposes to await his young companion at the inn, leaving his purse with him under pretext that he may want to purchase some trifle ere they meet again.

We next behold Olivia's garden, where this fair lady is telling her maid she has sent for the page, but does not know how to entertain him. Next she asks for Malvolio, who she is told is coming in strange attire, and behaving so queerly that he seems 'tainted in his wits.' A moment later the steward appears, wearing yellow stockings cross-gartered, and behaving so unlike a respectable servant that his mistress is shocked. To carry out instructions he thinks penned by her fair hand, Malvolio displays the utmost impudence, ogling Olivia, kissing his hand to her, and quoting whole passages of the letters, until she charitably concludes he is afflicted with 'midsummer madness.'

As a servant now announces the arrival of the page, Olivia bids her maid summon her uncle to watch over the mad steward, ere she goes away. Left alone, the fatuous Malvolio boasts 'nothing that can be can come between me and the full prospect of my hopes,' feeling sure Olivia is in love with him, and that she is now giving him a chance to show his contempt for her kinsman. When the Maid, therefore, returns with Sir Toby and Fabian,

the conceited steward, then and there, treats his mistress's uncle with such insolence that, pretending he is mad, Sir Toby orders him locked up in a dark room like an insane man.

After that, Sir Andrew reappears bearing a ridiculous challenge which he insists Sir Toby shall read aloud. Overhearing this production, the Maid volunteers that the person to whom it is addressed is now with her mistress; so Sir Andrew rushes out to post himself in the page's way, taking to heart Sir Toby's instructions to draw his sword and swear loudly as soon as he sees his antagonist, as that will give him the proper martial air.

Once rid of Sir Andrew, the two others decide not to deliver his written challenge, lest it betray the fact that he is an ignoramus. Instead, Sir Toby proposes to transmit one by word of mouth, frightening the page by picturing his opponent as a paragon of impetuous fury.

Both have left to settle plans, when Olivia and the page stroll upon the scene. Alone with the youth for whom she has conceived a violent passion, Olivia regrets having sought his affections only to be told his master suffers from unrequited love. But, before taking leave of the page, she wrings from him a promise to return on the morrow, and gives him a jewel.

When Olivia has gone, Sir Toby and his friend reappear, to deliver the challenge of Sir Andrew, whom they depict to the page as a fire-eater. Poor Cesario thereupon anxiously protests he has no quarrel with Sir Andrew, proffering all manner of

apologies. His tormentors will, however, allow ~~him~~^{him} no loop-hole of escape, and all he can obtain is ~~that~~^{that} Sir Toby will try to discover the nature of his offence, while Fabian keeps him company and incidentally amuses himself by increasing his fears.

Fabian and the page strolling off the stage, the scene is occupied by Sir Toby and Sir Andrew, the latter almost paralysed at the prospect of a duel with Cesario, whom Sir Toby describes as an expert fencer, notwithstanding his youth. In his terror, Sir Andrew offers to withdraw, pacifying his antagonist with the gift of his best steed, by which donation Sir Toby intends to profit!

Seeing Fabian return with the page, Sir Toby converses a while with his friend, ere both urge their principals to draw swords for appearance sake, it being impossible to conclude a duel honourably without fighting. So, while the page, in an aside, fervently implores the protection of Heaven, ruefully confessing it would not require much to make him reveal how little of the man there is in his composition, Sir Andrew is being heartened by his friends to act the part of a man.

The trembling antagonists have just been brought face to face, and are awaiting the signal, when Antonio rushes between them, imagining the page is Sebastian, whom he resembles so closely. When Antonio, therefore, offers to fight in his stead, the page proves so eager to grant him that privilege, that Sir Toby interferes, until Antonio in anger challenges him.

Toby and Antonio are just crossing swords, when

officers enter to arrest the latter for his attack upon the ducal vessel. Turning to Cesario,—whom he still thinks his protégé Sebastian,—Antonio now demands the return of his purse, not wishing to find himself penniless in prison. In reply to a request he fails to understand, the page generously offers to reward Antonio for interrupting the duel by sharing with him all he has—a sum which appears beggarly in comparison with the contents of Antonio's purse. Hotly reproaching the youth for ingratitude,—an accusation truthfully refuted,—Antonio indignantly describes how he saved Sebastian from the jaws of death, ere the officers lead him away.

It is only then that the page sufficiently recovers his senses to wonder whether his brother, whose name has just been uttered, may not have been saved by this seaman, and exclaims rejoicing, 'O, if it prove, tempests are kind, and salt waves fresh in love!'

Meantime it is evident that Sir Toby and his companions consider Cesario a paltry lad, who not only shows no courage in a fight, but is base enough to deny a friend. Such is the contempt they express after he has gone, that Sir Andrew eagerly offers to follow and slap him,—an act of daring which affords his companions such intense amusement that they follow to witness the fun.

ACT IV. The fourth act opens before Olivia's house, where Sebastian and the Clown are talking, the latter seeming amused that the former should deny his acquaintance, although he has brought him many messages. However, Sebastian good-naturedly gives the Clown a tip, and this individual is

just trying to secure a second donation, when Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, and Fabian arrive. Encouraged on by his companions, and thinking he is dealing with the cowardly page, Sir Andrew swaggers up and strikes Sebastian. But instead of the passive antagonist he expects, he suddenly finds himself attacked by an enraged man, who deems all Illyrians mad.

While the Clown rushes off in terror to summon his mistress, Sir Andrew, whose courage has evaporated at the first blow, vainly tries with Sir Toby's help to patch up the quarrel. But Sebastian indignantly refuses to overlook the insult received, so Sir Toby, dreading the outcome of his encounter with Sir Andrew, challenges him himself.

They are about to fight when Olivia rushes in, reproving her kinsman, and offering lavish apologies to the supposed page. While the three conspirators vanish, Olivia talks to Sebastian, whom she begs to follow her into the house, where she will give an explanation and make amends for the insult he has received. Her sudden appearance, kindly invitation, and familiar address, greatly bewilder Sebastian, who is, nevertheless, so charmed by her beauty that he exclaims, 'If it be thus to dream, still let me sleep!' as he wonderingly follows her into the house.

In a room in Olivia's dwelling, the Maid is next seen dressing the Clown to personate a priest, although he ruefully declares he is not learned enough to play such a part with success. His disguise completed, Sir Toby joins them, and bids the Clown knock at the door of Malvolio's cell, informing him

in loud tones that he is the priest. From behind the door the lamentable voice of the steward now begs the priest's intercession, protesting he should not be locked up in the dark, as he is not mad. Schooled for his part, the Clown declares Malvolio must be insane, seeing the place is flooded with light, and wittily defeats him with his own arguments when he tries to reason through the door.

While he is doing this, Sir Toby and the Maid go out together, whereupon, seeing himself alone, the Clown suddenly changes his tone and, being recognised by Malvolio, consents to get him paper and ink so he can communicate with his mistress. But, before doing so, the Clown impishly teases Malvolio by pretending to doubt his sanity.

The next scene is played in Olivia's garden, where Sebastian gazes around him, wondering how it happens the Countess should have treated him with such kindness. He is further mystified by her donation of a ring, and by Antonio's absence from the inn. Although under the impression he is under some delusion, Sebastian ardently hopes that Olivia may be real, as he has fallen desperately in love with her. When she appears, therefore, accompanied by a priest, begging him follow her to the altar, where the vows they have just secretly exchanged can be duly confirmed, he enthusiastically cries, 'Lead the way, good father; and heavens so shine, that they may fairly note this act of mine!'

ACT V. The fifth act opens before Olivia's house, where the Clown and Fabian are conversing, the latter vainly trying to obtain a glimpse of the let-

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ter Malvolio has written. They are interrupted by the arrival of the Duke, who, after discovering that they belong to Olivia's household, shows great condescension, rewarding the Clown's witty remarks with a gold coin. This tip calls forth new witticisms and a second donation ensues, but the Duke warily refuses to be tricked into a third unless the Clown bring his mistress.

It is at this moment Antonio is brought before him by the police, only to be recognised by Cesario as the very man who recently rescued him from peril,—meaning, of course, that Antonio saved him from Sir Andrew's sword. Gazing fixedly at the captive, the Duke recognises in him the seaman who once boarded his galley, and is about to vent his anger upon him, when his page intercedes. Addressing Antonio more temperately, therefore, the Duke bids him explain, thus learning that, although Antonio did fight against him on one occasion, he is no pirate, but a seaman who has come to Illyria out of devotion to the ungrateful lad standing beside him, in whose company he has been night and day for the past three months!

Such a statement amazes the Duke, who replies that his page, having been constantly with him, the seaman's declaration is palpably false. But, before he can investigate the matter further, Olivia appears, and, after greeting him, turns to Cesario, reproaching him passionately for not keeping his promises. These reproaches astonish master and page, until the Duke, fancying that Cesario has tried to supplant him, becomes so irate that he mutters, 'I'll

sacrifice the lamb that I do love,' a threat which has no terror for the page, but which almost paralyses Olivia.

But, when Cesario swears he will gladly follow the one he loves more than he can ere love wife, Olivia becomes so incensed, that she reveals her secret betrothal to the page, which he indignantly denies. Seeing the priest draw near who heard their vows, Olivia charges him to make the truth known, whereupon he duly admits having plighted the couple before him two hours ago.

While the Duke is angrily reproaching his protesting page for such treachery, Sir Andrew rushes in clamouring for a surgeon for Sir Toby, who has been grievously wounded by Cesario. This new accusation the Duke declares cannot be true, seeing his page has remained quietly beside him, although Sir Andrew reviles the lad for injuring his friend. The page truthfully denies ever hurting any one; yet, thinking Sir Andrew refers to the duel, tries to explain how he was compelled to fight against his will.

It is at this moment that Sir Toby is brought in by the Clown, clamouring for a surgeon. In reply to the Duke's questions, he tries to describe how his wound was received, but is too drunk to do so intelligently. Seeing his predicament, Olivia soon orders him off, so Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, and Fabian leave the stage with the Clown.

They have barely departed when Sebastian rushes in, apologising profusely for injuring Olivia's kinsman, who unaccountably attacked him, and asking

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why his lady-love gazes so coldly upon him? The appearance of Sebastian,—an exact counterpart of the page in face, voice, and apparel,—startles all present, and while the Duke comments softly upon it, Sebastian suddenly falls upon Antonio's neck, vowing he has endured much anxiety in his behalf. Staring at the two youths so exactly alike, the sailor expresses a surprise, shared by Olivia and by all the rest. Discovering his counterpart in his turn, Sebastian exclaims that while he once had a sister just like him, he knows she is drowned. Then he begins questioning the page, who admits that his father and brother both bore the name of Sebastian, and that the latter must be resting in a watery tomb,—for Viola feels convinced it is her brother's ghost she sees. After she has given irrefutable proofs of her identity, Sebastian embraces her, exclaiming this is his beloved sister Viola, and obliges her to admit that she donned male apparel to serve the Duke. When she adds that while in his service she often visited Olivia in his behalf, the Countess' mistake is explained, and Sebastian informs his betrothed that whereas she might have been pledged to a maid, she is now irrevocably bound to a man!

Although the Duke fancied he could never forget Olivia, he suddenly finds himself less inconsolable than he deemed possible, and turning to his page, eagerly inquires whether he told the truth when he declared he would never love any one as fervently as he loved his master. Unable to deny this impeachment, Viola is told to resume her former garb a command she promises to obey as soon as Malvolio,

who has seized her wardrobe in her absence, can make restitution.

Not at all sorry to exchange Cesario for his more virile counterpart, Olivia calls for her steward, whereupon the Clown, rushing forward, delivers his letter. In this missive Malvolio accuses his mistress of making him behave in unseemly fashion, before imploring her to set him free; it is so sane, however, that Olivia orders him liberated, ere, turning to the Duke, she welcomes him as brother, he having, meantime, decided to marry Viola, for whom he felt such tender affection when deeming her only a page. He also decrees that both weddings shall take place in his palace, whither all are invited to join in the festivities. Then, turning to Viola, the Duke dismisses her forever as page, and warmly welcomes her as a sweetheart, just as Fabian produces Malvolio. On being questioned, the indignant steward exhibits the letter responsible for his offensive behaviour, and when Olivia denies writing it, Fabian admits it was penned by her maid, adding that Sir Toby has just married this woman to reward her for playing so amusing a trick.

When the Clown slyly adds 'some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them,' Malvolio, failing to see any humour in such a remark, stalks off the scene, muttering wrathfully, 'I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you!' After Olivia has acknowledged that Malvolio has some ground for resentment, the Duke begs his followers hasten after to appease him, ere he bids Viola follow him back to the palace, where,

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having donned suitable garments, she will become 'Orsino's mistress and his fancy's queen.'

All the rest having left the stage, the Clown sings a ridiculous song as epilogue, wherein occurs the platitude that 'A great while ago the world began,' but that in spite of all that 'the play is now done.'

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

Act I. This play opens in the palace of the Duke of Ephesus, while he is giving audience to a Syracusan merchant, who has come to this city not knowing a recent ordinance condemns all his countrymen to death. A fine of a thousand marks being the only alternative, the prisoner despairs of being able to raise it among strangers, and exclaims 'woes will end 'with the evening sun!'

This philosophical remark amazes the Duke, who asks what the Syracusan's life has been, seeing he seems glad to lose it? In reply, Ægeon states that, born and married in Syracuse, he removed to Epidamnus, where his wife gave birth to twin sons, the same day that a slave woman was similarly seduced. The merchant's sons proving so exactly alike that no one could tell them apart, he gladly hired as attendants for them the twin children of this slave, because they, too, were exact counterparts.

Shortly after making this purchase, the merchant, his wife, and the four small children set out for home, only to be overtaken by a tempest, during which the crew deserted them on a dismantled ship. Forced to provide for the safety of his helpless family, the merchant bound his younger son and slave to a mast with his wife, attaching himself to another

with the two elder children, just before the vessel broke up. Although they now drifted apart, Ægeon saw his wife and the children with her rescued, ere he was swept away to be saved later by another ship, which brought him to Syracuse.

Notwithstanding constant efforts since then to discover traces of wife and missing children, the merchant has heard nothing of them. When eighteen, his sole remaining son insisted upon going in search of them, accompanied by his servant, equally anxious to find a twin. Receiving no tidings of these travellers, Ægeon followed them two years later, and, after vainly journeying about five years, landed in Ephesus, convinced of the loss of all he held dear!

Touched by Ægeon's sad story, the Duke says he would gladly free him, did not the law forbid; all he can do is to allow the Syracusan to scour the city in company of an officer, in hopes of raising the sum necessary to save his life.

In the next scene Antipholus, eldest son of the Syracusan merchant, just landed in Ephesus with his attendant Dromio, is met by a local tradesman, who charitably warns him not to reveal his birth-place, lest he, too, forfeit his life like the traveller to be executed at sunset. Instead, he bids the young Syracusan state he came from Epidamnum, advice which Antipholus gratefully promises to follow. Then, turning to his servant, he bids him go to the inn, entrusting to his keeping all his fortune, and promising to join him there when he has viewed the town.

Bearing off his master's funds, Dromio hints that another would decamp with them, words his master explains to the benevolent merchant by stating his man often beguiles his low spirits by similar jests. In reply to Antipholus' invitation to dine with him, the merchant urges a previous engagement, promising, however, to spend the evening with him instead. The merchant having gone, the Syracusan mournfully comments on not being able to find his missing brother, saying, 'I to the world am like a drop of water that in the ocean seeks another drop!'

While standing on the market place, he is approached by a man, so similar in appearance to his own servant Dromio that he naturally mistakes him for his slave. This is, however, the second slave,—also called Dromio,—who has lived with his master in Ephesus for many years. When the Syracusan master hails the Ephesian servant, asking why he has returned, this man, mistaking him for his employer, volubly bids him hurry home to dinner, for his mistress impatiently awaits his return.

Deeming this part of the fooling in which his servant indulges to divert him, the Syracusan, who is in no playful mood, bids him desist, and explain instead how he disposed of the money entrusted to him. Imagining his master refers to a sixpence given to pay a bill, the Ephesian servant vows he has delivered it to the sadler,—a statement the Syracusan regards as humorous evasion. But when the servant repeats he should hurry home to his waiting wife, Antipholus becomes so indignant that, although Dromio ruefully asserts his mistress has al-

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ready beaten him, he receives a second chastisement. To avoid further blows poor Dromio now runs away, while the Syracusan mutters he will have to hasten to the inn to make sure his money is safe.

ACT II. The second act opens in the house of Antipholus, the Ephesian, who bears the self-same name as his brother, just as his servant bears that of the Syracusan slave. For some time past the Ephesian has dwelt in this house with his wife, a wealthy woman called Adriana. Conversing with her sister, this lady impatiently wonders why her husband doesn't return, and what has become of the servant sent to get him? Her sister, Luciana, urges some merchant may have invited her brother-in-law to dinner, adding, to comfort the fretting wife, that men must be allowed some latitude.

When Adriana tartly inquires whether that is the reason why she has hitherto declined to marry, Luciana retorts that she will never do so until she has learned to be patient with a man's vagaries. Such statements, however, fail to appease Adriana, who bitterly remarks it is easy enough to be patient in regard to the shortcomings of some one else's husband!

They are still arguing when Dromio returns. Asked whether he has delivered his message, and why his master doesn't appear, the servant ruefully describes how he was received, vowing his master spoke of nothing but gold, rudely exclaiming when he mentioned his mistress—'I know not thy mistress; out on thy mistress!' On learning that she has thus been denied, Adriana, feeling sure her husband

must be in love with some one else, orders her servant to bring him home immediately, under penalty of a whipping.

The Ephesian Dromio has barely gone, when Luciana tells her sister that if she allows angry passions to distort her features, she will soon become homely, only to hear that it is impossible to refrain from anger and jealousy under such circumstances as these. Adriana then adds she would gladly forfeit the golden chain her husband promised her, were he only safe at home, showing such grief that she leaves the room weeping, while her sister comments upon the folly of jealousy.

We are next transferred to the market place, whither the Syracusan has returned, after ascertaining his money is safe at the inn. His servant not having been found there, he wonders where Dromio may be, when he suddenly sees him draw near. Sternly inquiring whether he has come to his senses, Antipholus, in spite of the man's evident surprise, reproaches him for pretending a while ago that his wife wanted him to hasten home to dinner. But the man truthfully denies all this, vowing he has not seen his master since he left him to carry the gold to the inn. In his anger at what seems wanton evasion, Antipholus beats Dromio, saying that, although he occasionally condescends to jest with him, he refuses to be mocked in serious moments.

The misunderstanding between master and man continues, neither suspecting there are in this town two masters and two servants, bearing the same names and looking exactly alike. They are still dis-

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puting when Adriana and her sister burst upon the scene. Taking the Syracusan for her husband, Adriana, calling him by name, hotly reproaches him for not coming home on time, and for publicly denying her existence. In her jealousy, she accuses him of forgetting her for the sake of some other fair dame,—a reproach which amazes the Syracusan, who gravely assures her that never having seen her before, and having been in Ephesus only two hours, he doesn't understand what she means.

Such a statement,—considering his exact resemblance to the Ephesian Antipholus,—causes Luciana indignantly to exclaim that he should treat his wife with more respect! On hearing that Dromio,—whom, of course, he deems his servant,—was sent to summon him home, only to be ill-treated, Antipholus is nonplussed. He, therefore, questions the man, who truthfully denies ever having seen Adriana, a statement she and Antipholus refuse to credit, the latter on account of the message brought a while ago.

Sure now that both husband and slave are in league against her, but determined not to lose sight of them again, Adriana exclaims, 'Come, I will fasten on this sleeve of thine: thou art an elm, my husband, I a vine,' using such eloquence and determination that the Syracusan, fancying there must be some truth in her statement, and that he married her in a dream, prepares to yield.

When Luciana bids Dromio hurry home, he crosses himself, wildly muttering that witchcraft is at work, and it is only after his master has cer-



A Richter

THE TWO DROMIOS REUNITED

Dro. E. "Methinks you are my glass, and not my brother:
I see by you I am a sweet-faced youth."

Comedy of Errors. Act 5, Scene 1,

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that he still bears his wonted form, that he sure he has not been transformed into some creature. The persistent Adriana now leads Mollus home, charging Dromio to mount guard door, and not admit any one, hinting that he one for previous misconduct by implicitly carrying out these orders. It is in a state of bewilderment that the Syracusan accompanies his wife and son-in-law, while his servant decides to obey or to play porter.

III. The Syracusan Dromio is behind the door when the Ephesian master arrives with his wife and a couple of merchants whom he has invited to dinner. After explaining that they must wait—his wife being irritable when he is not at home,—the Ephesian begs one of the guests to go to Adriana that the delay occurred because he is so anxious to bring her the promised golden ring which can be ready only on the morrow. He reproaches Dromio for saying he has already brought him twice; whereupon his man ruefully cries that were his skin parchment and the blows red ink, he could prove by his master's own handwriting the truth of his words. Not guilty of having beaten Dromio, the Ephesian resents this accusation, and knocks loudly on his door.

Instead of admittance, he and his servant are rebuffed by the Dromio within, who, boldly giving them no answer, calls himself Antipholus' porter, stating that he is guarding the door while his master and mistress are out. The conversation between the real master and his servant without, with Dromio within, fairly

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bristles with misunderstandings, the noise they make finally bringing maid and wife to inquire what it means?

Both women are so sure Antipholus and Dromio are with them, that they indignantly refuse to admit any one else. Thus locked out, master and man threaten to break in the door, desisting only when one of the merchants suggests such a proceeding would cause vulgar comment and cast a slur upon the Ephesian's wife. In his anger, however, the husband swears he will punish Adriana, by dining at the inn with some courtesan, upon whom he will bestow the golden chain which he bids the goldsmith bring when he sups with him that evening.

The next scene is played in the Ephesian's house, where Luciana, left alone with the Syracusan, reproaches him for cold behaviour to his wife, telling him that, although he wed her sister for the sake of her fortune, he should atone for the anxiety she has just endured by a few caresses. Her gentle pleading fascinates the Syracusan, who, although not attracted by his brother's wife, is greatly charmed by her sister. Seeing he persists in complimenting and wooing her, Luciana, deeming it a mark of disrespect to her sister, refuses to listen when he exclaims, 'Thee will I love and with thee lead my life: thou hast no husband yet nor I no wife.' Instead, she volunteers to fetch Adriana, so they can make friends.

It is while Antipholus is awaiting Luciana's return, that Dromio runs in, dismayed at being called

husband by the cook, of whom he gives an unflattering description in reply to his master's questions. Both master and man, mystified at being claimed as husbands by ladies who have no attractions for them, conclude they are victims of some witchcraft, and that they had better leave Ephesus as soon as possible. The master, therefore, bids his servant hurry down to the shore, and put their luggage on board a vessel ready to sail—a command which the servant gladly obeys, saying, 'As from a bear a man would run for life, so fly I from her that would be my wife.'

His servant having gone, the Syracusan vows he, too, would fain flee from the wife claiming him, although he is so deeply enamoured with her sister, that he has to defend himself against her charms as from a mermaid's song. It is while he is alone that the goldsmith enters, calling him by name, and delivers the golden chain. Amazed at receiving such a gift, the Syracusan asks what he is to do with it, whereupon the goldsmith states he ordered it, and departs, adding he can pay for it at supper. The Syracusan wonders over this episode, and over the many strange happenings of the day, ere deciding to hasten to the market-place, where his servant will meet him as soon as he has made arrangements to sail.

ACT IV. The fourth act opens on the public square, where a merchant accosts the goldsmith, claiming the immediate payment of a debt, as he wishes to leave that day. Although not denying the debt, the goldsmith does not at present possess the necessary sum, but says he can easily obtain it from

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Antipholus, who owes him such an amount for a golden chain. He, therefore, volunteers to go in quest of this customer, accompanied by the merchant, who does not wish to lose sight of him until the money is paid.

These two soon perceive the Ephesian and his servant returning from the inn, and overhear the master state he is on his way to the goldsmith's, bidding his servant go and purchase a rope's end, with which to beat the saucy servant who locked them out that noon. The Ephesian Dromio has just departed on this errand, slyly hoping to wield the rope himself, when Antipholus accosts the goldsmith, reproaching him for not having brought to the inn the golden chain. Unable to understand such a reproach, after having himself placed it in Antipholus' hand, the goldsmith demands the immediate payment of his bill, so he can rid himself of the merchant's company.

Instead of dispensing the expected sum, the Ephesian bids the goldsmith claim the money from his wife in exchange for his chain, although the distracted artist insists he has already delivered it. When the Ephesian denies it, he incurs the contempt of both his interlocutors, and contradictory statements result in a quarrel, wherein the merchant finally calls for an officer to arrest the goldsmith—an insult the latter immediately avenges by having Antipholus taken into custody, too.

The double arrest has just occurred when the Syracusan servant returns from the port. Not knowing there is another man in town just like his

master, this Dromio hastens up to the Ephesian to report that they can sail immediately; but whereas he expects praise for diligence, he is hailed as a madman, the Ephesian hotly denying having sent him on any other errand save to purchase a rope. Not allowed to pause long enough to sift this matter to the bottom, the Ephesian, led off by the officer, calls to Dromio to hurry home for the purse of ducats in his desk which will purchase his release.

Left alone on the square, desk key in hand, Dromio debates whether he dare return to the house where the fat cook claims him as husband, but after some cogitation, decides 'servants must their masters' mind fulfil,' and hurries off in quest of the money to free the Ephesian.

The next scene is played in the house, where the two women are talking, the wife insisting upon hearing every word her supposed husband said to Luciana, who vainly tries to soften the fact that Antipholus denied ever having been married, and made desperate love to her. In her attempt to induce the unfortunate Adriana to overlook her husband's shortcomings, Luciana, hearing her decry him, exclaims such a husband is no loss, whereupon the wife—however willing to censure him herself,—defends Antipholus vehemently, saying, 'My heart prays for him, though my tongue do curse!'

Their conversation is interrupted by the arrival of the breathless Dromio, bringing the key and demanding the money to free his master,—arrested, he knows not on what charge. While Luciana hastens off to procure the ducats, the wife, questioning

the servant, learns that something has been said about a chain. She has not, however, been able to discover any more, when her sister returns with the money, and Dromio hurries off to free the prisoner he takes for his master.

The curtain next rises on a public square, where the Syracusan wonders because almost every man he meets calls him by name, invites him, or offers to sell him some commodity. When his servant runs up, delivering the Ephesian's gold, the master wonderingly inquires what it means, and thinks his man must be distracted when he reports seeing him a while ago in custody of an officer. Charitably concluding they are both suffering from delusions from which they will be freed only when they have left Ephesus, Antipholus prepares to depart. But, before he can do so, the courtesan, with whom his twin brother has been dining, rushes up demanding the chain he wears around his neck, which was to have been given her in exchange for her ring. When the Syracusan gravely denies having dined with her, received a ring, or promised her a chain,—fearing lest she may receive no equivalent for her token,—the courtesan gives vent to such anger that master and man flee.

Left alone in the square, the irate courtesan decides that Antipholus must be mad, else how could he deny dining with her. Besides, she remembers that the story he told of his exclusion from home sounded suspicious. She, therefore, determines to claim the promised chain from Antipholus' wife, telling her that her husband, in a fit of mental abei

ration, rushed into her house and bore off her property!

We next see the Ephesian walking along the street with his guard, promising not to escape, but soon to satisfy all claims with the money his servant will bring. He accounts for the delay by stating his wife has been in a wayward mood lately, and seeing a Dromio appear, naturally deems him the servant he sent in quest of the ducats, as well as to purchase a rope.

When the Ephesian master demands his money, the man replies there was no change, and delivers his purchase. Thereupon numerous questions, a beating, and considerable abuse ensue,—the servant truthfully insisting he has never been sent for money, but for a rope. It is just at the end of this misunderstanding that the Ephesian's wife, her sister, the courtesan, and a physician appear upon the square. The women are bringing this doctor in hopes he can perform some conjuring tricks, whereby Antipholus will be freed from the evil spirit which makes him deny his wife and bestow gifts upon strangers.

On perceiving the excitement to which the Ephesian is a prey, they naturally conclude it is a symptom of insanity—a conviction heightened by his striking the physician, who tries to feel his pulse! Finding this patient possessed by so evil a spirit, the physician begins his conjuring, only to be rudely lenced by the Ephesian, who accuses him of abetting his wife in locking him out of his house. This atement causes Adriana to exclaim her husband

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must be mad indeed, seeing he dined at home,—appealing to her servant and to Luciana to confirm her words. But, whereas the servant readily testifies he and his master were locked out, Luciana vows both were at home, one dining, the other acting as porter.

As Adriana goes on to explain that she has just given Dromio the required bag of gold, the man indignantly denies it, protesting he has not been back to the house, and thereby increasing the confusion. In his anger, the Ephesian now shows such violence that Adriana signals to men lurking in the background, who rush forward and bind him fast, to prevent his doing himself any harm.

It is while the Ephesian Antipholus is being thus secured that the officer refuses to give him up, unless paid for the chain,—money which Adriana is ready to disburse. Meantime, the courtesan clamours that this chain was to have been given to her in exchange for the ring on Antipholus' finger.

While the Ephesian is led away bound by doctor and attendants, his wife, the courtesan, and officer discuss this affair, until the Syracusan suddenly dashes past them with drawn sword, closely followed by his servant. Owing to the resemblance between masters and men, Adriana thinks her husband has become a raving maniac, and flees screaming, her actions causing the fugitives to pause and recognise her. Deciding it best not to remain in a town where they are likely to be claimed as husbands by women whom they do not affect, both long to depart.

ACT V. The fifth act opens in a street before a

Priory, where the merchant and goldsmith are conversing, the latter apologising for keeping the former waiting for his money, saying it is strange Antipholus should deny receiving the chain, as he has hitherto enjoyed an enviable reputation for honesty.

They are interrupted by the appearance of the Syracusan Antipholus and his servant, the former wearing the chain in question round his neck. As this seems insult added to injury, the goldsmith hotly reproaches his supposed patron for denying having received his wares—a denial the Syracusan refutes, although the merchant asserts he overheard it.

To be accused of such baseness so irritates the Syracusan that he challenges the merchant, with whom he is just beginning to fight, when Adriana, her sister, and the courtesan rush upon the scene, the frantic wife imploring the merchant to spare her mad husband, and calling upon her followers to bind fast master and man, and take them home. Terrified at the prospect of such a fate, the Syracusan servant hastily advises his master to seek sanctuary with him in the Priory, into which both rush, and from whence the Abbess soon emerges to forbid further pursuit.

When Adriana tearfully explains that they have come in quest of her maniac husband,—whom the goldsmith acknowledges not to be in his right mind, and whom the merchant regrets having challenged,—the Abbess demands how his insanity revealed itself? The unhappy wife then states that, although Antipholus has met with neither loss nor sorrow, his

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frequent absences from home have caused her anxiety. Her answers to the Abbess' questions plainly reveal her jealous recriminations have been almost incessant, that the holy woman soon pitifully declares a wife's jealousy has driven Antipholus mad! She, therefore, refuses to let Adriana see her husband, declaring that, because he has taken refuge with her, she will defend him, making use of her skill to restore his health and mind. Then, notwithstanding Adriana's recriminations, she vanishes within the Priory gates.

The Abbess having gone, wife, sister, goldsmith, and merchant decide to petition the Duke to interfere in their behalf. The merchant avers they can easily do so, since the Duke is due here within the next few minutes, to witness the execution of the old Syracusan merchant, who has been unable to raise the required fine. All, therefore, decide to linger in this neighbourhood until the Duke arrives, when they intend to fall at his feet and beseech his aid.

A moment later the Duke appears with his train, and the heralds proclaim the prisoner must die unless his fine be paid. Rushing forward, Adriana falls at the Duke's feet, hysterically demanding justice against the Abbess,—a request which amazes him, as a lady of such holy repute cannot have done wrong. But, on hearing Adriana explain what has happened, the Duke, who is deeply attached to Antipholus, immediately promises to investigate the affair.

It is at this juncture that a servant rushes in, calling to Adriana to save herself, and reporting that

master and man, exasperated by the doctor's treatment, have broken bounds and are at large. That is no news to Adriana, who, therefore, treats the man with contempt. But a great hue and cry induces the Duke to call upon his guards to protect the women, and, glancing down the street, Adriana is amazed to behold the husband, whom she thought in the Priory, but whence he has since doubtless escaped by magic arts. Rushing forward, the Ephesian and his man implore the Duke to protect them, just as the prisoner exclaims that, unless the fear of death has dazed his mind, he beholds his missing son, Antipholus, and servant, Dromio.

The Ephesian, who has no recollection of his father's face, fails, of course, to recognise the prisoner, to whom he pays no heed, entering instead a formal complaint against his wife, who has closed his doors upon him, and revelled during his absence. These accusations Adriana and Luciana hotly deny, insisting that he dined in private with them. The Ephesian now angrily adds he is accused of receiving a chain never delivered to him, summoned to pay for what he has not received, and arrested and treated like a madman, because he will not yield to the vagaries of those around him. Hearing this, the Duke cross-questions the goldsmith, who confirms Antipholus' statement that he was locked out of home, but insists he gave him the chain he saw a moment ago upon his neck. The merchant also vows he saw the chain; and, unable to restrain his curiosity, inquires how Antipholus escaped from sanctuary? When the Ephesian testily denies ever having

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been within the Priory walls, as well as all knowledge of the chain,—which the courtesan claims,—the Duke comes to the conclusion that all present are mad, for none of his questions elicit the truth.

He has just sent a servant to summon the Abbess,—by whose aid he hopes to solve the mystery,—when the prisoner, stepping forward, announces that, his son being there to pay his ransom, he can now be liberated immediately. Allowed to explain, Ægeon asks Antipholus whether such is not his name, and whether his servant is not Dromio; but, although the Ephesian admits such is the case, he denies ever having seen the prisoner, who concludes grief has made him unrecognisable. In his despair, Ægeon appeals to the servant, who, like his master, denies all knowledge of him, and confirms Antipholus' statement that his father was lost at sea. When the prisoner states that Antipholus lived with him in Syracuse for eighteen years, the Duke himself contradicts him, as he has known the Ephesian all his life. Then, imagining the old man must be doting, he is just bidding him cease advancing foolish claims, when the Abbess appears, followed by the Syracusan Antipholus and his servant.

Advancing with dignity, the Abbess begs to place under ducal protection a wronged man, and all present start with amazement when they behold two masters and two servants so exactly alike that none can tell them apart! All present express surprise, Adriana thinking she sees two husbands, and the Duke wondering which is the mortal man and which the spirit, as it doesn't seem possible two human

beings could be such exact counterparts. Startled at coming face to face, the two Dromios, in sudden terror, implore the Duke to send the other man away, each claiming he is the only genuine bearer of the name.

Meantime, the Syracusan has no sooner caught a sight of the prisoner, than he joyfully embraces him as father, a recognition his man confirms. To everybody's surprise, the Abbess also announces he is her long-lost husband Ægeon, relating how, after she, one son, and one slave were rescued, the children were taken from her by cruel pirates, leaving her so bereft that she entered a nunnery, where she has dwelt ever since.

This explanation reveals to the Duke that there are now two Antipholuses in Ephesus, as well as two Dromios; so, to avoid further confusion, he bids masters and servants stand far apart. Little by little it then becomes clear how the Syracusan and his servant came to town and dined by mistake with the Ephesian lady, who has been claiming her brother-in-law as husband. The goldsmith admits that the chain he fancied having given to the Ephesian, was, on the contrary, delivered to the Syracusan, who, never having ordered it, could not be held responsible for its payment.

When the Syracusan produces the bag of ducats brought by his servant, saying he cannot imagine whence they came, nor why they were given him, the Ephesian joyfully claims his property, and offers to pay for his father's release,—which is no longer necessary, as the Duke has pardoned him. Last of

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all, the courtesan claims her ring, which the Ephesian cheerfully returns, having borrowed it merely to tease his wife.

These points being settled, the Abbess invites all present to the Priory, where she intends to celebrate the joyful reunion of parents, sons, and servants. All, therefore, follow her, save the two Antipholuses and Dromios, whose resemblance is such that, owing to a slight shifting of position, the Syracusan servant again addresses his master's brother by mistake, offering to remove his luggage from the ship in which he was about to sail. For a moment the Ephesian master is again deceived, but his error is soon rectified by his brother, and the twin masters leave the scene together, leaving the two Dromios face to face.

While the Syracusan servant openly congratulates himself on being brother-in-law and not husband to the objectionable cook, his brother is pleased to find himself as good-looking as this fraternal reflection proves. But not being able to determine who is the elder, and hence entitled to precedence, the Dromios leave the stage arm in arm, exclaiming, 'We came into the world like brother and brother; and now let's go hand in hand, not one before another.'

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA

ACT I. This play opens in a square in Verona, where Valentine, talking to his friend Proteus, announces he is about to depart for Milan, where he would fain have his friend accompany him were not the latter Love's slave. Although it is impossible for him to leave Verona, Proteus ironically promises to pray for his friend, who retorts a lover's risks are as great as those of travellers.

After Valentine has gone, promising to let his friend hear from him, Proteus avers that, whereas Valentine is evidently hunting for honours, he is wholly absorbed in his passion for Julia, who has made him forget everything else. His soliloquy is interrupted by the arrival of Valentine's servant, inquiring for his master. Before answering, Proteus tries to find out from this man,—whom he had employed as messenger to Julia,—whether he has delivered his letter, rewarding him for his witty remarks by a tip. But, the servant gone, Proteus begins to doubt whether his missive were delivered, and concludes to send another messenger to make sure that Julia doesn't remain without news.

We next behold Julia's garden, where she is interviewing her maid, Lucetta, of whom she takes advice in her love affairs. After her mistress has enumerated her various suitors, Lucetta comments

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upon each, shrewdly noticing, however, that Julia reserves all mention of Proteus to the last. She, therefore, gives a favourable verdict in regard to this swain, ere proffering the letter brought by Valentine's man. Having pretended indifference all along, Julia scornfully refuses to accept Proteus' letter, but no sooner has the maid carried it off than she longs to call her back, ruefully admitting that girls in love often act contrary to their feelings. She, therefore, summons Lucetta under some futile pretext, and when the maid ostentatiously drops the missive at her feet, angrily bids her cease annoying her. Then, as the servant, whose remarks exasperate her, is about to remove the offending paper, Julia suddenly snatches it and tears it to pieces, ordering Lucetta to leave the fragments on the ground.

Left alone, the fickle Julia bewails having torn her lover's letter, and, longing to discover what it contains, pieces the bits together. Although unable to restore it entirely, she discovers a few scraps bearing affectionate words, which she hides away in her bosom, ere Lucetta summons her to join her father at dinner. In passing off the stage, Julia carelessly mentions the papers on the floor, knowing there is nothing more among them she cares to see.

We are next transferred to Proteus' house, where, talking to a servant, his father learns people are wondering his son should linger at home while other youths of his age and station are sent abroad to study. Not wishing Proteus to lack advantages other young men enjoy, the father decides to send

him off on the morrow to join Valentine, fancying that at the Milanese court his son will soon learn the accomplishments which will transform him into a graceful cavalier.

It is at this moment that Proteus enters, poring over a letter he has just received from Julia in answer to his partly read epistle. But, when his father inquires what he is reading, Proteus mendaciously replies that he has heard from Valentine, now abroad. His father begging to see the letter, Proteus refuses to show it, volunteering instead that his friend is inviting him to come to Milan, too. Thereupon the father announces Proteus may go thither, and, although the youth tries to postpone the moment of departure, insists upon his leaving the next day and hurries off with the servant to make preparations for the journey.

Left alone, Proteus bitterly regrets the vain falsehood which now parts him from his beloved Julia, but has little time to devote to remorse, as the servant soon returns, bidding him join his father.

ACT II. The second act opens in the palace in Milan, where Valentine is conversing with his servant, who, by mistake, hands him a glove belonging to the Duke's daughter Silvia, with whom Valentine has meantime fallen in love. Having discovered his master's passion, the servant ably describes love's symptoms, revealing plainly how he has watched his master stare at his lady-love. But when Valentine rapturously vows the lady's attractions are such that no one can refrain from doing so, his man wittily avoids being entrapped into the

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admission that she is the most beautiful person ^{on} earth.

Next Valentine confides to his man that Silvia has bidden him write lines addressed to one ~~be~~ loved—lines he has found difficult to compose. Just then Silvia enters, and while Valentine greets her, his servant withdraws to the background, whence he slyly comments on all his master says and does. He thus overhears Valentine explain that, although he has composed the required poem, it fails to satisfy him, adding that, had he addressed one he loved, he could have displayed far more eloquence.

After coolly glancing at the paper he proffers, Silvia admits the lines are quaintly written, but soon after returns them, stating she would prefer something more spontaneous, and suggests he write from his heart, since that will insure fluency.

When Silvia has gone after this criticism, the servant remarks that the lady is teaching his master his duty, as she evidently expects him to write her a love-letter. But, however welcome, these tidings seem too incredible to Valentine, who displays all the diffidence of the true lover.

The next scene is played in Verona, in Julia's house, where Proteus is reluctantly bidding farewell to his lady-love, promising to return from Milan as soon as possible, and exchanging keepsake rings with her. When she has left, Proteus dwells with intense satisfaction upon the emotion she has shown, and the tears choking her voice,—delightful memories over which he gloats until his father's servant summons him away.

In the same town, but out in the street, Proteus' servant is next seen giving vent to uncouth sorrow at parting from the various members of his family, whose farewells he describes. But, although every one else sheds plentiful tears at his going, he sorrowfully remarks his dog remained stolid throughout the farewell scenes, which he reproduces in pantomime. At this point he is interrupted by a fellow servant, who bids him hasten to join his master, vowing that they will otherwise miss the tide. In the course of their talk, these two men exchange puns and indulge in a war of wit, they two being the fun-makers in the play.

The curtain next rises in the Duke's palace at Milan, where Silvia is talking to Valentine, although the fact that she does so enrages Sir Thurio, the suitor her father favours. Even Valentine's servant notices his irritation ere leaving the room, and, before many moments pass, the rival lovers begin twitting each other in the lady's presence. Seeing Sir Thurio finally change colour, Valentine pokes fun at him, but although he scores him, he nevertheless manages at the same time to compliment Silvia, whose favour he is anxious to win.

This three-cornered, bitter-sweet conversation is interrupted by the arrival of the Duke, reporting news has just come from Valentine's father, announcing Proteus' speedy arrival. On hearing his friend is on the way, Valentine praises him as a charming and well-informed young man; his encomiums becoming so enthusiastic that the Duke declares such a youth must be worthy of an empress'

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affections. He therefore bids his daughter and Sir Thurio welcome him cordially ere leaving the room.

Valentine then explains to Silvia that this is the gentleman whose love affairs have afforded her so much entertainment, before Proteus is ushered in and presented to her. She admits him to the circle of her followers, proving so gracious, that the youth, who has hitherto been wrapped up in his Julia, suddenly forgets her, to fall madly in love with his friend's sweetheart.

A summons from the Duke, forcing Silvia to leave the apartment with Sir Thurio, she bids Valentine and Proteus use that opportunity to discuss home news, knowing they have a great deal to say to each other. Almost immediately Valentine confesses that, whereas his friend's talk of love once bored him, he now cares to converse on no other subject, having himself become victim to the tender passion.

When Proteus inquires who the object of his devotion may be, Valentine not only admits he loves Silvia, but that he is so beloved by her in return, adding that, as the Duke refuses to countenance any suitor but Sir Thurio, they have decided to elope that very night. In reply to his friend's questions, Valentine explains how he is to climb to his lady's bower by means of a rope ladder, and bear her away. Then, having secured his friend's aid for the elopement, Valentine leaves the room; whereupon Proteus wonders that one love should so soon have driven the other out of his head, his passion of Julia having thawed 'like a waxen image 'gainst a fire,' until it

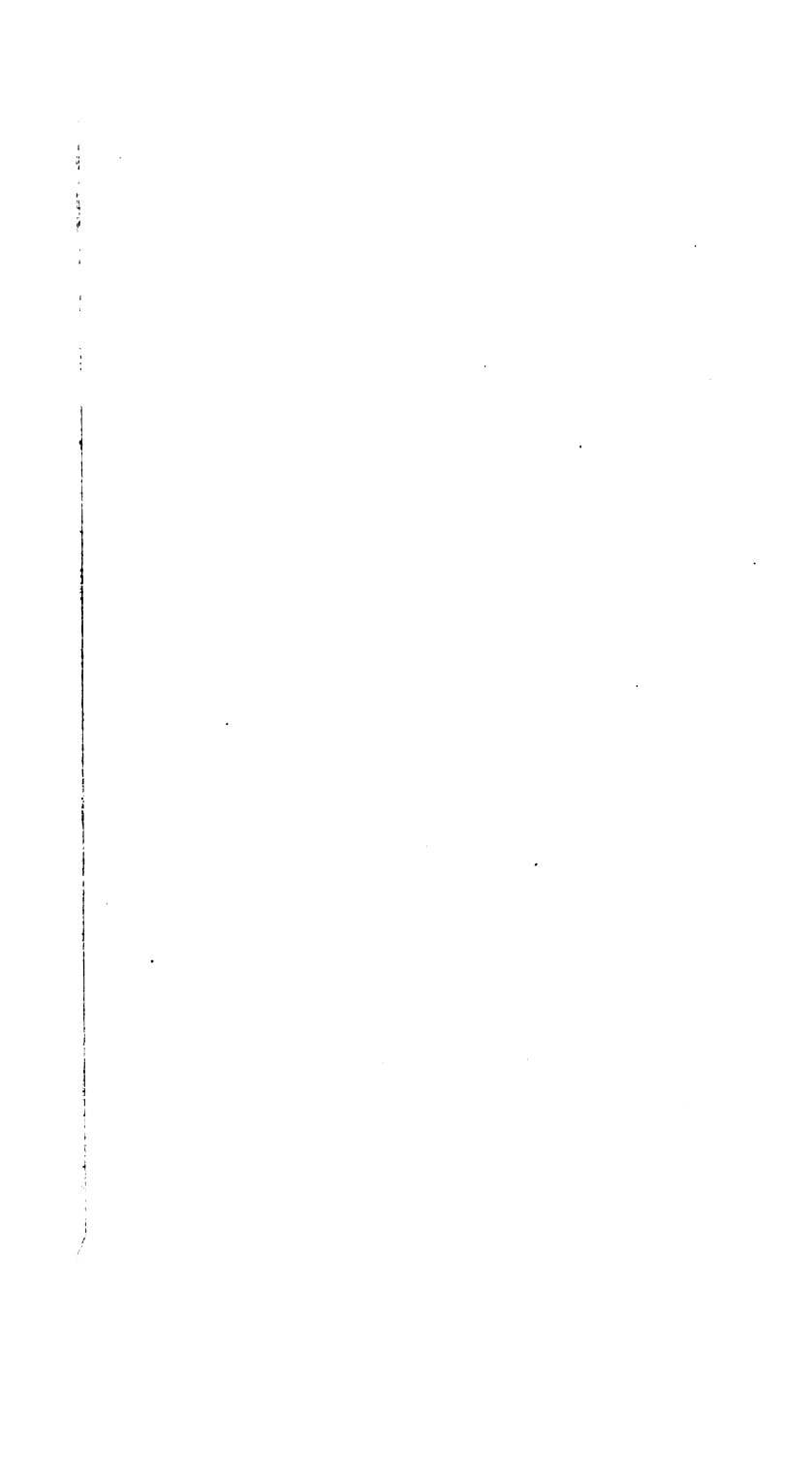


C Green

THE SERVANT'S PUN

Speed. "What an ass art thou! I understand thee not."
Launce. "What a block art thou, that thou canst not!
My staff understands me."

Two Gentlemen of Verona. Act 2, Scene 5.



now 'bears no impression of the thing it was.' Because he wishes to win Silvia himself, Proteus suddenly determines, 'If I can check my erring love, I will; if not, to compass her I'll use my skill.'

Meantime, in the streets of Milan, the servants of Valentine and Proteus meet, exchanging welcomes, remarks, and comments on their masters' affairs. In the course of this conversation, the one confides that his master took sad leave of Julia, after exchanging rings with her, there having not been time to marry, while the other propounds conundrums and makes puns, both servants evidently deriving considerable entertainment from quizzing each other.

The curtain again rises in the palace, where Proteus is still pondering how to supplant his friend in Silvia's affections. Although fully realising he will be foresworn should he forsake Julia and betray his friend, the temptation proves too strong to resist. After some specious reasoning, therefore, Proteus persuades himself that charity begins at home, and that, as Silvia so far surpasses Julia in attractions, he must win her for his own.

He, therefore, decides to reveal Valentine's plot to the Duke, knowing the latter will prove grateful for such a warning, and will speedily banish the unwelcome suitor in hopes of forcing his daughter to accept Sir Thurio, a rival who appears far less dangerous than Valentine, and whom he can easily outwit.

The next scene is played in Verona, in Julia's house, where, after calling Lucetta into council,

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she bids her devise means whereby she can journey to Milan, to rejoin the lover whom she misses so sorely. Although the handmaiden offers sundry objections, Julia declares she 'hath Love's wings to fly,' vowing that, unless the journey be undertaken pretty soon, she will pine away for lack of her beloved.

As all objections only increase her ardour for the journey, the servant finally ceases to oppose Julia, and inquires what disguise she proposes to assume? Having determined on a page's garb, Julia discusses with her maid the cut and style of the costume she is to wear. But even so interesting a subject as this cannot long divert her attention from Proteus, whom she praises to the skies, mentioning his tears at the moment of parting as proof of his affection. The maid, however, does not consider tears convincing, for she merely remarks she hopes her mistress may find Proteus as faithful in Milan as in Verona, ere she departs to prepare for the journey.

ACT III. The third act opens in the palace in Milan, just as the Duke is dismissing Sir Thurio to give audience to Proteus. Taking advantage of his first private interview with the Duke, Proteus, after sundry false protestations of fidelity to his friend and of loyalty to his master, finally confesses that duty forces him to reveal that Valentine plans to elope with Silvia that very night; adding, sanctimoniously, that, although asked to become an accomplice in this deed, he cannot reconcile it to his conscience to do so.

After expressing gratitude for Proteus' warning,

the Duke confesses his suspicions have been so roused for some time past that his daughter now lodges in a tower of which the key is always in his own custody. Although he, therefore, fancies Silvia safe, Proteus proves how Love laughs at locksmiths by informing him of the rope-ladder scheme, which is to enable the lady to escape. Having thus thoroughly exposed his friend's plans, Proteus implores the Duke not to betray him, and leaves the room, calling his attention to Valentine's approach.

Turning to the new-comer,—who endeavours to steal past him, concealing a rope-ladder beneath his cloak,—the Duke inquires what he is carrying, only to hear it is a parcel of letters. But Valentine displays considerable annoyance when the Duke detains him to discuss his daughter's projected alliance with Sir Thurio, although he tries to disguise his impatience by saying it would be a fine match, and by inquiring how the lady views the swain?

Thereupon the Duke exclaims his daughter is undutiful, as she has refused to accept his choice. He professes to be angry enough to cast her off, consoling himself for her loss by marrying again. When Valentine inquires how he can serve the Duke in so delicate a matter, this nobleman replies he is anxious to learn the newest methods for courting. Valentine thereupon suggests that he woo his lady-love with gifts, and when the Duke vows she scorns his presents, assures him that no lady's refusals are to be taken seriously. He winds up his lecture on courtship by saying, 'That man that hath a tongue, I

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say, is no man, if with his tongue he cannot win a woman.'

When the Duke describes how inaccessible this lady is, Valentine suggests his visiting her by night, bidding him use a rope-ladder to reach her. This scheme appeals to his grace, who minutely inquires what such a ladder may be, and where it can be procured? Whereupon Valentine promises to supply him with one that very evening, advising him to wear a cloak like his, so he can carry it unnoticed.

The Duke, who has been asking all these questions with a purpose in view, now insists upon removing the cloak from Valentine's shoulders to try it on; thereby revealing the fact that the youth is carrying a letter addressed to Silvia, and a rope-ladder such as he has described. After taking possession of the letter, the Duke reads it aloud, only to discover that it contains eloquent protestations of affection, and a promise to free Silvia that very night.

Turning upon Valentine, the Duke now reviles him as an impudent wretch, who has presumed to raise his eyes to his daughter, vowing he shall be exiled from court and slain if caught within the limits of his territory!

After pronouncing this stern decree the Duke departs, while Valentine wails that to leave Silvia is equivalent to death, and that no happiness remains to him on earth if he cannot see her. Still, mindful of the ducal threats he dares not tarry, and is about to flee to save his life.

It is at this moment Proteus appears, calling to his servant to find Valentine, whom he seems re-

joiced to discover here. He announces, however, that he is bearer of bad news, and when Valentine anxiously inquires whether any harm has befallen Silvia, replies that a recent ducal proclamation exiles him from Milan. When Valentine asks whether Silvia is aware of this decree, Proteus describes her tears, saying she fell at her father's feet and implored him with clasped hands to spare her lover. Her grief and intercession, however, only added fuel to the Duke's wrath, making him decree her imprisonment, which news adds bitterness to Valentine's sorrow.

In attempting to comfort his friend, Proteus bids him remember that 'hope is a lover's staff,' ere he urges him to depart, promising to transmit his letters to Silvia. Thereupon Valentine bids his friend's servant notify his own man to meet him at the north gate, ere he leaves the stage arm in arm with Proteus. They have barely gone when the servant remarks that Proteus is a knave, having cheated his friend out of his lady-love. He, therefore, concludes it better not to tell any one of his own love affairs, although immediately thereafter he begins talking to himself of the milkmaid he is wooing, whose perfections he has jotted down upon a paper.

It is while he is conning this list, that Valentine's servant enters; so both men begin one of their sparing, punning conversations, in the course of which Valentine's man snatches the paper from his companion's hand and rattles off the lady's faults and virtues. Only when considerable time has been wasted in this manner, does Proteus' man suddenly remember to deliver his message, and Valentine's

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man hurries off to join his master, while his companion gleefully comments that he will probably be beaten for his delay.

The next scene is played in the palace, where the Duke is interviewing Sir Thurio, assuring him that, now Valentine is banished, he will soon be able to win his daughter's favour. This reasoning does not, however, convince Sir Thurio, who explains that, since Valentine's departure, the lady has been most unkind. Their conversation is interrupted by the entrance of Proteus, from whom the Duke inquires whether Valentine has gone, commenting on his daughter's grief at his banishment.

When Proteus assures him this sorrow will soon cease, the Duke gladly agrees, while Sir Thurio continues despondent. Meantime, entirely deceived by Proteus' pretended devotion to him and to his daughter, the Duke pours out into the youth's ear complaints in regard to Silvia's perversity in continuing to love a suitor of whom her father does not approve. In hopes of changing the young lady's mind, the Duke also begs Proteus to visit her frequently, slandering his friend whenever he has access to her, so as to undermine her affection for Valentine.

It is under pretence of serving the Duke that Proteus accepts this charge, being secretly delighted with the opportunity it affords him to be with the lady, press his own suit, and win her favour. Still, to throw dust in the eyes of the father who deems him safe because betrothed, Proteus bids Sir Thurio compose sonnets in honour of his lady-love and

serenade her. This advice is approved by the Duke, who pronounces Proteus an expert lover, and Sir Thurio gravely promises to carry it out, leaving the room immediately in quest of musicians to serenade Silvia that evening.

ACT IV. The fourth act opens on the frontiers of Mantua, in a forest, where outlaws are watching all the paths to arrest travellers. When the brigands, therefore, behold Valentine and his servant, they challenge them to stand and deliver, although their victims claim they have nothing save their clothes, having just been exiled from Milan.

Having suffered a similar penalty, the outlaws eagerly inquire for what cause Valentine has been banished; whereupon he pretends to have fought a duel in which his opponent was fairly slain. As such a murder seems perfectly legitimate to the outlaws, they fraternally invite Valentine to join them, explaining that they, too, have been exiled for like offences. Next, they invite Valentine to become their chief, threatening to kill him unless he complies; so he determines to make a virtue of necessity, provided they will pledge themselves to 'do no outrages on silly women or poor passengers;' for, like Robin Hood, he is willing to despoil the rich, but eager to protect the poor.

The next scene is played in Milan beneath Silvia's window, where Proteus stands alone, commenting upon his treachery to his friend and his proposed disloyalty to Sir Thurio, whose suit he is pretending to further. He adds that, although granted free access to Silvia, he has not yet been able to undermine

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her trust in his friend, and that she reproaches him for disloyalty to Julia, his former sweetheart, whenever he tries to make love to her. Although Silvia has been so unkind that any other suitor would feel discouraged, Proteus declares that, 'spaniel-like, the more she spurns my love, the more it grows and fawneth on her still.'

His soliloquy is interrupted by the arrival of Sir Thurio with musicians to serenade Silvia, and it is while the performers are tuning their instruments that Julia, disguised as a page, is led into the background by the host, who has brought a despondent guest into this garden, hoping to cheer him with music. As they enter, the host declares the page will here see the gentleman concerning whom he inquired. Then, after decrying the singing of a dainty sonnet, the page asks whether Proteus ever visits Silvia, only to learn that his servant reports him madly in love with the Duke's daughter. Besides, the host volunteers, this servant has just been sent to procure a dog, to be offered to the lady in his master's name on the morrow.

The serenaders now leave, and Sir Thurio follows them, promising to meet Proteus on the next day. All have gone when Silvia opens her window, and thus Proteus receives the thanks intended for the serenader. When he fervently exclaims he is always anxious to fulfil her wishes, Silvia bids him cease annoying her with attentions, and return to his former lady-love. Thereupon, Proteus swears Julia is dead—a remark which Silvia answers indignantly, while Julia softly vows that, although

she may be dead, she is not yet buried! When Proteus ventures to assert that Valentine, too, has passed away, Silvia refuses to believe him, but is weak enough to yield to a flattering request for her picture, vowing, however, that it will speak to him in the same strain as she does herself.

After Silvia and Proteus have withdrawn, the page rouses his nodding host to inquire where Proteus now lodges, as he wishes to visit him. Then, all being quiet on the scene, Sir Eglamour, a knight-errant, steals near, having come to receive Silvia's orders. At his call, the fair lady opens her window and begs him to escort her, when she leaves home on the morrow to avoid marrying the suitor her father is forcing her to accept. She adds that she can trust Sir Eglamour, knowing he has vowed fidelity to the memory of his beloved, and implores him to take her to Mantua, where she hopes to rejoin Valentine. She also agrees to meet Sir Eglamour at the cell of a holy friar, where she often goes for confession, and all arrangements being completed, both leave the stage.

A while later the scene is occupied by Sir Proteus' servant, with the dog he took to Silvia. It is not, however, the choice animal his master wished to bestow upon his lady-love, but his own cur, whose training has little fitted him for a lady's drawing-room. A moment later Proteus comes upon the scene, talking to the page, whom he fails to recognise, but whose appearance is so prepossessing that he wishes to employ him as messenger to Silvia. On discovering his servant's presence, Proteus in-

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quires how the lady received his gift, only to be told she refused the dog with scorn,—a refusal quite comprehensible to Proteus when he discovers that his man offered her a cur in his name!

While the servant departs in quest of the valuable animal which he claims was stolen from him, Proteus resumes his conversation with the page, bidding him carry a ring to Silvia which was once given him by one who loved him dearly. When the page artlessly inquires whether the giver is dead, Proteus denies it; so the page pities the lady, hinting she may have loved him as passionately as he now loves Silvia, remarks to which Proteus pays no heed. Instead, he directs his emissary how to reach the lady, bidding him claim, in exchange for the ring, the promised picture.

When Proteus has gone, Julia comments upon the strange fate which makes her the bearer of such a message, and compels her to carry her own ring to the person who has supplanted her in her lover's affections. Instead of pleading Proteus' cause, as has been enjoined upon her, Julia intends to do the contrary, and, therefore, eagerly questions a lady who steps upon the scene. On ascertaining it is Silvia, the page delivers both message and ring, claiming the picture which he is sent to procure. Silvia not only refuses to read Proteus' letter, but tears it up contemptuously, declaring she has no respect for the writer. Then she spurns the ring, knowing it was given to him by a lovely lady he once loved, and adding that she will never so wrong a fellow-woman.

At these words the page heartily thanks her, and when Silvia wonderingly inquires whether it is because he knows the lady in question, vows he is as well acquainted with Julia as with himself. He adds that this lady was once dearly beloved by Proteus, and describes her beauty and figure, saying she is exactly his height, for she once allowed him to wear her garments to act a play. All this information proves vividly interesting to Silvia, who bestows a reward upon the page ere leaving the scene with her attendants.

The page now has an occasion to comment upon her generosity to a stranger, her gentle compassion for a forsaken lady, and her loyalty to her own sex and lover. Then, in the picture which has been delivered to him, he studies Silvia's attractions, ascertaining with delight that she is no better looking than Julia, who, he hopes, may some time recover Proteus' love.

ACT V. The fifth act is begun in the friar's cell, where Sir Eglamour is waiting at sunset for Silvia, who is to join him there. When he sees her appear, he greets her eagerly, only to be told to go and await her at the postern gate, as she fears they may be spied upon. To reassure her, Sir Eglamour states the forest is near, and that, once within its mazes, they will be safe from pursuit.

The next scene is played in the palace, where Sir Thurio is questioning Proteus in regard to his prospects of winning Silvia. He seems delighted when told he has made progress, the lady only criticising certain defects in his person, which he proposes to

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remedy by altering his dress, although the page, present in the background, saucily comments such alterations will be of no avail.

After some more conversation, devoted to feeding Sir Thurio's vanity, the Duke comes in, inquiring whether Sir Eglamour and his daughter have been seen? It soon becomes evident Silvia has fled with the knight, a friar reporting having seen them both in the forest, near the cell where Silvia goes for confession. In his indignation at his daughter's escape, the Duke bids both young men accompany him in pursuit of the fugitives, whom he hopes to overtake before they cross the frontier.

The Duke having gone, Sir Thurio vows it is a peevish girl who tries to escape such a suitor as himself, and decides to join the pursuit only to avenge the insult Sir Eglamour has put upon him. Meantime, Proteus decides to join the expedition for love of Silvia, and the page so as to outwit his treacherous plans.

We next behold the forest on the frontier of Mantua, where outlaws have just seized Silvia, whom they are leading away to their captain. By their conversation we discover Sir Eglamour has managed to escape, and that, while two of their number are pursuing him, the rest are accompanying the lady to their chief's cave, where they promise her honourable treatment. Meantime, in another part of the forest, Valentine is cogitating over his position in this solitude, and dreaming of the lady whom he loves so dearly, but cannot see. In spite of his abstraction, however, he soon becomes aware of some

commotion in the forest, and idly wonders what travellers his companions have arrested?

Just then he beholds an advancing group, consisting of Proteus, Silvia, and Julia, still disguised as a page. Having surprised the outlaws leading Silvia away, Proteus has boldly rescued her, and is now claiming as reward some mark of her favour, which she still refuses to bestow upon him. Overhearing this, Valentine can scarcely credit his ears, and listens intently when Silvia wails that she would rather have been seized by a hungry lion than by so false a man as Proteus. She adds that the love she bears Valentine is so true she cannot but despise his treacherous friend, who should be ashamed of forgetting the loyalty due to Valentine and his oaths to Julia. Then, she concludes by urging Proteus to show greater fidelity to both lady-love and friend, paying no heed to his arguments in defence of his passion. But, when Proteus attempts to lay forcible hands upon Silvia to bend her to his will, Valentine suddenly steps forward, bidding him desist, and reviling him for conduct he never would have credited.

Being thus confronted by Valentine's contempt, Proteus, suddenly realising how deeply he has sinned, makes an humble apology, which Valentine accepts, being generous enough to pardon any injury done him, and saying, 'Who by repentance is not satisfied is not of heaven nor earth.' Then, thinking it possible Silvia may love his friend better than himself, and that only virtue keeps her loyal, Valentine magnanimously offers to relinquish all rights to her. Afraid this will prevent her recovering

her lover, Julia now faints away, so both men hasten to the rescue of the fainting page. On recovering his senses, the page exclaims he has been very remiss, for he has not yet delivered the ring which Proteus bade him give Silvia. But Proteus now perceives with surprise it is no longer the token he gave the page, but that which Julia received as his parting gift! An explanation ensues, in the course of which Proteus discovers the page is Julia, who has assumed male garb only to follow him. The devotion she has shown so touches him that he declares himself cured of inconstancy, and glad to return to his former allegiance.

This conclusion pleases Valentine, who bestows his blessing upon the reunited lovers, just as the outlaws bring in the Duke and Sir Thurio, whom they have captured in the forest. The brigands seem delighted to have secured such a prize, but Valentine no sooner recognises the Duke than he does obeisance to him, bidding his men immediately set him free.

Surprised to discover Valentine and his daughter together, the Duke does not interfere when Valentine demands that Sir Thurio relinquish all rights to Silvia or forfeit his life. When Sir Thurio promptly acquiesces, asseverating—'I hold him but a fool who will endanger his body for a girl that loves him not'—this statement proves to the Duke that he is too much of a coward to strike a single blow to defend his claim to Silvia. Besides, the father is now so struck with admiration for Valentine, that he bids him marry his daughter and re-

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Turn to court, where, by-gones being forgotten, they can begin a new life.

This consent to his marriage charms Valentine, who takes courage to beg another boon, which the Duke graciously promises to grant, whatever it may be. Then Valentine eloquently pleads in behalf of the outlaws, all of whom are pardoned and reinstated, after promising to become good citizens.

This settled, all return to Milan, Valentine promising to shorten the way by an account of his adventures, and explaining that the youthful page is none other than the fair Julia, who has come hither in quest of a recreant lover. The only punishment inflicted upon Proteus consists in an exposition of his treacherous plans, ere he is allowed to marry Julia,—while Valentine espouses Silvia,—and all thereafter enjoy ‘one feast, one house, one mutual happiness.’

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST

ACT I. The first act opens in the park of the King of Navarre. He enters upon the scene announcing he has decided to lead the contemplative life hereafter, with three friends, who have sworn to share his studies for the next three years. During this time 'Navarre shall be the wonder of the world,' and his court 'a little Academe, still and contemplative in living art.' One of these noblemen, Longaville, fancies that during that time 'the mind shall banquet, though the body pine,' Dumain, that he will enjoy 'living in philosophy,' while the third, Biron, deems it will be easy to study that length of time, but that the stipulations not to speak to women, to fast, and never to sleep more than three hours a night, will prove 'barren tasks, too hard to keep.'

The king, however, assures him that, having joined his company, he will have to keep the oath, although Biron objects it was taken merely in jest. He declares his private study shall henceforth be how to feast when told to fast, how to meet some lady fair, and wittily demonstrates that such is the aim and end of all study. His humorous retorts to royal objections fill up the greater part of the scene, the remarks exchanged bristling with witty epigrams, wherein the poet's talent is freely dis-

played. Seeing his principal companion has turned festive, the king finally suggests that Biron leave them to their studies, whereupon the latter rejoins he will remain with them, and sign the paper the king produces. Before doing so, however, he reads aloud the peculiar item, 'that no woman shall come within a mile of my court,' a decree published four days ago under penalty that any woman drawing near the palace will lose her tongue. The second item is that any man seen talking to a woman during the next three years will have to undergo such punishment as his companions decree.

When Biron hints the king himself will be the first to break this rule, since the French King's daughter is on her way to consult with him in regard to the cession of Aquitaine, Navarre admits he forgot that fact when the paper was drawn up, and that there will have to be an exception made in the princess' favour. Hearing his royal master plead necessity, Biron sagely remarks, 'Necessity will make us all forsworn three thousand times within this three years' space, for every man with his affects is born!' Nevertheless, he signs the decree, and states that, although he seems 'so loath,' he is confident he will be 'the last that will last keep his oath!'

When he inquires what recreation is to be granted, the king explains how Armado, a refined traveller from Spain, who 'hath a mint of phrases in his brain,' will delight them with tales of his native country. Hearing this, Biron seems to be satisfied, but the others frankly admit their chief amusement will

be derived from Costard, the rustic. Just then, this man is brought in by the constable Dull, who also delivers to the king a letter from Armado. While his majesty is reading it, Costard informs Biron how he was caught with Jaquenetta in the park, and that, although 'it is the manner of a man to speak to a woman,' he is now to be punished for it.

The king next proceeds to read aloud his letter, wherein, with much wordy circumlocution, Armado describes how he found Costard—whom he honours with epithets the rustic acknowledges as applicable to him—talking 'with a child of our grandmother Eve, a female!' The letter concludes with the statement that the swain is sent in the constable's custody to the king to be judged, Armado meanwhile keeping the other delinquent in his house ready to produce her at the king's request. This reading finished, his majesty begins to cross-question Costard, who admits speaking to a woman, although he insists he did not thereby infringe the law, as it declared any one taken with a 'wench' would be arrested! The rustic claims that a virgin, damsel, or maid, is not a 'wench,' an excuse the king refuses to accept. He, therefore, decrees that in punishment, Costard shall fast a week on bran and water, Biron himself delivering him over to Armado, who is to act as keeper during that space of time. Then the king leaves the scene with two of his friends, while Biron lingers to exclaim he is ready to wager his head 'these oaths and laws will prove an idle scorn.' This assurance Costard echoes, stating

he is suffering for truth's sake ere Dull leads him away.

The next scene is played on the same spot, where Armado is bidding his pupil Moth tell him what it portends when a man grows melancholy? Then the two indulge in a duel of repartee, wherein they parade their wit and learning. After calling for an explanation of almost every term Moth uses, Armado finally reveals he has promised to study three years with the king, but has already broken his promise by falling deeply in love with a lowly maiden. To comfort himself, he has his disciple recapitulate the names of the world's great lovers, and describe the charms of their lady-loves. Still, Armado avers all pale before the 'white and red' of his own charmer, in whose toils he is completely caught. Next, still hoping to divert his thoughts, the master invites the pupil to sing, but before the song can begin several persons draw near.

Among them we see the constable Dull, who reports the king has sent Costard to Armado to be detained a prisoner, and has decreed that Jaquenetta shall remain in the park as dairy-maid. This news pleases Armado, who arranges to visit his new sweetheart at the lodge, ere he dismisses her and Dull. Then, he entrusts Costard's keeping to Moth, and when they have gone off together, indulges in a soliloquy in regard to his passion for Jaquenetta, for whose sake he is forsworn, and in whose honour he proposes to indite a sonnet!

ACT II. The second act opens before the same park, just as the Princess of France and her train

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arrive on the scene. The chamberlain, Boyet, now bids his mistress pluck up spirit, as her father has sent her hither to obtain from the King of Navarre the restoration of Aquitaine. The princess, however, deeming this task beyond her strength, dreads it, for she counts little upon her physical charms. Besides, she has heard it rumoured Navarre has withdrawn from society for three years of silent study, during which no woman will be allowed to approach his court! Not daring to brave such a decree herself, the princess sends her chamberlain into the park, to inform the King of Navarre that the daughter of the King of France is waiting at his gates for an interview, 'on serious business, craving quick dispatch.'

The chamberlain having departed with cheerful alacrity to execute these orders, the princess inquires of her train whether any of them know the gentlemen who have joined the king in his studious retirement? When Longaville, Dumain, and Biron are mentioned, Maria, Katharine, and Rosaline describe in turn how they became acquainted with these lords, each description proving so laudatory on the whole, that the princess declares all three must be in love, for each has garnished her lover with 'bedecking ornaments of praise!' The ladies have barely finished their euphuistic descriptions of the three knights, when the chamberlain returns, announcing that, unable to admit them on account of his oath, the King of Navarre will come out and speak to them at the gate, as that will be no infringement of his word.

A moment later, his majesty appears with his three companions and train, and gallantly bids the fair French princess welcome to his court of Navarre. When the princess, in return, ironically welcomes him 'to the wide fields,' the king explains with embarrassment that he has sworn an oath he cannot break. The princess, however, archly predicts it will soon be violated, and enters into a conversation with the king, while Biron entertains Rosaline, both couples testing each other's mettle in the then fashionable game of repartee.

After some polite verbal skirmishing, the king states the question as he understands it, promising that, as the princess has come to settle the business in her father's behalf, she shall return 'well satisfied to France again,' although he intimates the King of France's demands are unjust. When the princess reproaches him with not acknowledging the payments her father has made, Navarre courteously rejoins he has never heard of them, but is willing, if she proves her case, either to repay the sum in full, or to surrender Aquitaine, which he holds in pledge. Although unable to produce the required documents on the spot,—for the packet containing them has not yet arrived,—the princess accepts the offer and begs the king to postpone decision until the morrow. Navarre, therefore, takes courteous leave, again regretting not to be able to receive the fair princess more worthily within his gates, but assuring her 'here without you shall be so received as you shall deem yourself lodged in my heart, though so denied fair harbour in my house.' Then, returning

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her gracious farewell with the oft-quoted, 'Thy own wish wish I thee in every place!' Navarre departs.

Meantime, Biron, who has been conversing with the quick-witted Rosaline, takes leave of her, too, and rejoins his master, while Dumain and Longaville linger behind to ask the chamberlain the names of two of the princess' attendants who have particularly attracted their notice. It is quite evident both these gentlemen have fallen in love, as well as Biron, who, as soon as they have gone, returns to ask Boyet Rosaline's name, and to ascertain whether she is already married?

The gentlemen once out of hearing, Maria declares the last to go was Biron, a man who enjoys the reputation of never uttering a word save in jest. Such being the case, the chamberlain rejoins he answered the stranger in his own vein, and encouraged by Maria's playfulness, volunteers to kiss her. She, however, refuses such advances, declaring her lips are 'no common,' and chaffing him until the princess remarks they must save their wit to exercise it on Navarre and 'his book-men.' Hearing this, the chamberlain gallantly assures his royal mistress the King of Navarre fell so deeply in love with her at first sight, that, provided she play her part well, he will give her 'Aquitaine and all that is his,' in return for 'one loving kiss.' Pretending to consider such a remark impertinent, the princess retires to her pavilion, while her maids linger to gibe at Boyet, whom they term 'an old love-monger,' since he is to be their messenger whenever they wish

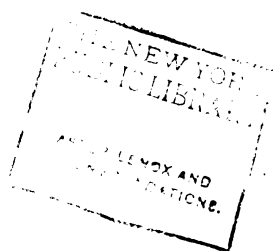


R. Hillingford

THE NINE WORTHIES

Hol. "Great Hercules is presented by this imp,
Whose club killed Cerberus, that three-headed canus!"

Love's Labor's Lost. Act 5, Scene 2.



to communicate with the unapproachable court of Navarre.

ACT III. The third act opens in the same place, just as Armado is enjoining upon Moth to sing to him, and after listening to his song, bids him release Costard, so he can carry a letter to his love. After commenting upon these orders in wordy style, and arguing for a while about love, the pupil goes, and Armado, the pedant, sinks into melancholy. He is roused from his reflections by Moth's return with Costard, whom he introduces by a pun, which gives rise to another display of recondite wit on the part of master and pupil. It is only after some time, therefore, that the love-letter is entrusted to the wondering Costard, who is told to deliver it to Jaquenetta. Delighted with his freedom, and with the gift which the pedant grandiloquently terms a 'remuneration,' Costard watches master and pupil depart, and then reaches the conclusion that remuneration must be the Latin for 'three farthings.' Still, as that is a larger sum than he has ever before received, he is so pleased with the term that he vows, 'I will never buy or sell out of this word.'

The rustic is still commenting upon his unusual luck, when Biron joins him, and, after some talk in regard to the purchasing power of three farthings, retains his services for the afternoon. Then Biron confides to the rustic that he wishes a letter delivered to Rosaline, one of the ladies in the princess' train. He has noticed that the ladies daily hunt in this part of the forest, and wishes his 'sealed up counsel,' safely placed in Rosaline's fair hand. To

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insure this he now hands Costard, with the letter, a 'guerdon,' which proves to be a whole shilling, thus causing the rustic to hope none but 'gardons' will henceforth come his way!

The delighted Costard having departed, Biron, in a soliloquy, confesses he has fallen victim to 'Dan Cupid,' whose wiles he eloquently describes, for he, who has ever made fun of 'his almighty dreadful little might,' is now reduced to 'love, write, sigh, pray, sue, and groan.'

ACT IV. The fourth act, played in the same place, reveals the princess with her hunting train inquiring of the chamberlain whether it was the king who in the distance, 'spurred his horse so hard against the steep uprising of the hill?' Because the chamberlain seems doubtful, the princess haughtily remarks that, whoever it was, he showed a 'mounting mind,' and concludes that his majesty's answer is due to-day, and that they will return home as soon as it is received. Then, turning to the forester, she inquires where she had better post herself, for she prides herself upon her fine shooting. While conversing wittily with this gentleman forester, and with her chamberlain, the princess is suddenly accosted by Costard, who blunderingly asks whether she is 'the head lady?' Amused by his awkwardness and simplicity, the princess mystifies him for a while, and then only asks for whom his message is intended? On learning it is a letter, from Monsieur Biron to Lady Rosaline, the princess takes possession of it, vowing it shall be read aloud to all present. She, therefore, breaks the seal, and hands

it to her chamberlain, who finds it is addressed to Jaquenetta. Still, as his mistress insists upon hearing it, the chamberlain reads aloud a missive couched in such grandiloquent style that it hugely amuses the princess. She is still marvelling at its succession of parentheses within parentheses, when Boyet assures her it can have been penned only by Armado, a fantastic traveller, who 'makes sport to the prince and his book-mates.'

Hearing this, the princess questions the rustic, who artlessly tells her Lord Biron gave him the letter for Lady Rosaline. Coldly informing him he has made a mistake, the princess hands over the letter to Rosaline, and leaves, followed by most of her train. The chamberlain, lingering behind with Rosaline, teasingly tries to obtain some information from her, but encounters only clever, evasive answers, couched in the style of the times. When Rosaline and Katharine have followed their mistress, the chamberlain and Maria pump the rustic, who answers their witticisms in kind until they leave him with a reproof. Thus left to his own devices, Costard declares he is 'a most simple clown,' whom these lords and ladies are trying to mystify, but expresses keen admiration for Armado, whose manners in ladies' company seem to him the acme of elegance.

After the rustic has left, the scene is occupied by the schoolmaster Holofernes, the curate Sir Nathaniel, and the constable Dull, who discuss learnedly about hunting matters, the schoolmaster, in particular, interspersing his remarks with Latin words,

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which he ostentatiously translates for the benefit of his companions. They are both duly impressed although the constable, ignorant of classic tongue, often mistakes a Latin word for some similar sounding expression in English. The curate, however, charitably explains and excuses such errors, by saying Dull has 'never fed of the dainties that are bred in a book,' that 'he hath not eat paper, as it were; he hath not drunk ink!' These excuses seem somewhat uncalled for by Dull, who, to exhibit some learning, too, propounds a riddle as old as the hills which his companions solve without difficulty. The three-cornered conversation continues until interrupted by the arrival of Jaquenetta and Costard.

Returning their greetings in his pedantic way, the schoolmaster learns that Jaquenetta has received a letter through Costard, which she wishes to have read aloud to her. After a sonorous Latin quotation from Holofernes,—which the curate admires,—the latter reads aloud Biron's flowery epistle, couched in verse far too elegant for Jaquenetta to understand. The pedantic schoolmaster, however, criticises the curate's mode of reading poetry, and vows he did not accent the lines properly. Then he demands of the damsel who the writer of this epistle may be, and when told, 'Biron, one of the strange queen's lords,' glances in surprise at the superscription. Now only, he discovers it is addressed 'to the snow-white hand of the most beauteous Lady Rosaline,' and notices that the signature is 'your ladyship's in all desired employment, Biron.' From this fact he sagely concludes the letter has fallen into the wrong hands,

and bids Jaquenetta hasten to deliver it to the King of Navarre. Afraid to venture alone, Jaquenetta again bespeaks Costard's escort, and, after they have gone, the schoolmaster and curate discuss the verses, ere both depart; the former to dine with one of his pupils, to which meal he invites the constable Dull.

They have barely left this picturesque glade when Biron appears there, holding a paper, and declaring that, while the king is hunting the deer, he is coursing himself, for love pursues him incessantly and inclines him to melancholy and rhyming. While regretting he should have perjured himself so soon, he wonders whether his companions are afflicted with the same mad disease, until he suddenly becomes aware the king is drawing near, and hides in the bushes to take note of what he is doing. Deeming himself alone, the king sighs in such a sentimental way that Biron exclaims in an aside that his master has fallen victim to Cupid's art. He decides that by lending an attentive ear he may discover the royal secrets, and is soon rewarded by overhearing Navarre thoughtfully recite some verses he has composed, wherein he reveals how desperately he has fallen in love with the French princess. These lines he intends to drop in her way, just as Longaville draws near in his turn, also reading aloud. Wishing to ascertain why his follower is prowling thus alone in the forest, and what he is reading, the king plunges into the bushes, to spy upon him.

Utterly unconscious of two listeners, Longaville

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now strolls forward, wailing he is forsworn, which causes the king and Biron to remark separately he is acting exactly like a man on the stage. By when the unfortunate man wonders whether he first to perjure himself, a whisper from Biron the bushes avers that three, at least, of their band are guilty of this sin! Meantime, Longaville expresses fear lest his stubborn lines fail to impress 'sweet Maria, empress of my love,' and seems for a while inclined to tear them up and resort to plain prose. Still, after perusing them aloud, to the secret entertainment of his listeners, who comment upon his pompous lines, he decides to send them, although he does not know by what agency.

At this point, Longaville is disturbed in his cogitations by the sound of approaching footsteps, and promptly hides in his turn, while Biron mutters that they are acting just like children, while he sits aloft like a demigod in the sky, discovering 'wretched fools' secrets.' Unconscious of three eavesdroppers, Dumain comes in sighing, 'O most divine Kate,' and proceeds to make sundry remarks about his lady-love's charms. Meanwhile, Biron, the king, and Longaville ironically comment upon his statements, although they all fervently echo his lover-like 'O that I had my wish!' Dumain, too, reads aloud verses he has composed, which he intends to send with 'something else more plain, that shall express my true love's fasting pain.' He expresses so ardent a desire that the king, Biron, and Longaville were lovers too, for 'none offend where all alike do dote,' that Longaville emerges from his

hiding place, virtuously exclaiming he ought to blush to be 'o'erheard and taken napping so!' But, scarcely has Longaville finished this hypocritical reproof, when the king, issuing from the bushes in his turn, vows Longaville has doubly offended, since he is in a similar plight, and has spent considerable time expatiating upon Maria's charms. This royal reproof, addressed to Longaville, simply delights Biron, who waits until it is ended, ere he steps out in his turn to 'whip hypocrisy,' for, although he humbly begs his master's pardon, he cannot refrain from wittily describing how he overheard Navarre behaving just as sentimentally as Longaville or Dumain. Biron is still ridiculing all three,—who are covered with confusion to have been overheard and wince when Biron repeats their speeches,—and has just launched into a tirade, wherein he states he holds it sin 'to break the vow I am engaged in,' when tramping is heard, and Jaquenetta and Costard rush in.

After greeting the king, this couple breathlessly declare they have a paper, which must be treason, and which they hand over to him. While the king questions the messengers,—who declare the missive was given them by the pedant Armado,—the king carelessly hands it over to Biron, who no sooner glances at it, than he furiously tears the paper to pieces. His master, wonderingly inquiring why he does this, Biron rejoins it was a mere trifle, but Dumain and Longaville insist it 'moved him to passion,' and curiously gather up the bits to see what they mean. To Dumain's surprise he discov-

ers they are in Biron's handwriting! Seeing himself betrayed by Costard's stupidity, Biron now confesses he made fun of his friends without having any right to do so, seeing he is in the same predicament as they. He acknowledges 'that you three fools lack'd me fool to make up the mess,' and that they four 'are pick-purses in love,' and hence 'deserve to die.' Then, urging his master to dismiss the rustic couple,—who depart with the virtuous consciousness of having ably fulfilled a weighty duty,—Biron rapturously embraces his fellow-sinners, declaring sagely, 'young blood doth not obey an old decree.'

When the king asks him whether the torn lines were addressed to some one he loves, Biron enthusiastically launches out into a panegyric of 'heavenly Rosaline,' over whose charms he raves, until the king and his friends proceed just as rapturously to claim the palm of beauty for their lady-loves. The duo between the king and Biron, who are the readiest speakers, is varied by an occasional quartette, in which Dumain and Longaville take part, so as to defend and uphold the attractions of their sweethearts. In the course of this fourfold rhapsody and dispute in regard to the preëminence of their beloveds' charms, these men employ the extravagant euphuistic expressions current at that day to describe female attractions. Finally, Biron pronounces that the only study worthy of mankind is that of the opposite sex, and declares women's eyes are 'the ground, the books, the academes, from whence doth spring the true Promethean fire.' The

four lovers, therefore, conclude 'it is religion to be thus forsworn,' and decide, instead of foolishly carrying out their original programme, to lay siege to the hearts of all four ladies. This motion being enthusiastically carried, plans are made to entertain the ladies in their tents with a series of masques, revels, and dances, each suitor pledging himself to do his best to entertain his special innamorata, and strew 'her way with flowers.'

ACT V. The fifth act opens on the same spot, just as the schoolmaster, the curate, and Dull are expatiating in characteristic fashion upon the enjoyment they have derived from their meal. The curate and schoolmaster use many pretentious words, until interrupted in their verbal pyrotechnics by the arrival of the very man whose arts they were discussing. When Armado, with Moth, and Costard have joined them, a conversation is begun, wherein the learned speakers parade considerable false Latin and make far-fetched puns, while Moth slyly whispers to Costard that 'they have been at a great feast of languages, and stolen the scraps!' Then, taking his part in the discussion, Moth displays wit which appeals so strongly to Costard's limited sense of humour, that he bestows upon him the 'remuneration' he received a little while ago.

Finally, Armado informs his companions, in such a maze of words that it is difficult to discover their meaning, that the king and his companions wish to entertain the ladies with a pageant. Knowing the schoolmaster's and curate's talents in this line, Ar-

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mado has come to bespeak their aid. Flattered by such a compliment, the schoolmaster enthusiastically suggests they present the 'Nine Worthies,' he himself volunteering to play three of the parts, and awarding the rest to his companions. When they object that Moth,—whom he selects for Hercules,—is far too small and puny to suit the character, he readily declares the page shall personate the infant Hercules, and strangle serpents, declaiming an apology of his composition, while Dull accompanies him on the tabor. This settled, all depart to prepare for this wonderful play.

The princess and her maids now appear in their turn, commenting merrily upon the rich gifts, or fairings, their respective lovers have sent them, each token being accompanied with verses which they discuss. In the course of this conversation they chaff each other wittily, and exhibit their letters and gifts. Finally the chamberlain bursts in, almost choking with laughter, bidding them prepare for a great onslaught, and exclaiming, 'Muster your wits; stand in your own defence; or hide your head like cowards, and fly hence!' When the princess eagerly inquires what he means, he explains that, while dozing beneath a sycamore, he overheard the king and his companions plotting to surprise the four ladies in the guise of Russian mummers, and laboriously teaching a page the speech he is to recite in herald's guise. Boyet adds, that, after dancing before the ladies, these Russian lovers will each invite the object of his affections to tread a measure with him, all feeling confident they can recog-

nise even masked sweethearts, thanks to the ornaments they will doubtless wear.

The princess no sooner learns this merry plot, than she decides to outwit it, and, quick as a flash, exchanges tokens with her companions, so that each Russian will lead away the wrong masked lady, to whom he will doubtless make a formal proposal. Her intention is 'to cross theirs,' for she feels sure 'they do it but in mocking merriment,' and is, therefore, anxious to pay them back in their own coin. Her conclusion that 'there's no such sport as sport by sport o'erthrown,' meets with such approval from the other three ladies, that they promptly assume masks as soon as trumpets are heard, and prepare to carry out the deception they have planned to bewilder their disguised suitors.

A moment later the promised entertainment is ushered in, the page Moth marching ahead, prepared to recite his piece. He remembers it, however, so imperfectly, that the attitude of the ladies,—who, instead of facing him, suddenly turn their backs upon him,—puts him out entirely. Although Biron frantically prompts him, the poor youth gets so tangled up that he finally flees in disgrace! Because she personates the princess, Rosaline now haughtily inquires of the chamberlain who these people may be, and asks that they make known the purpose of their call? When the chamberlain replies they have come to dance before her, she seems to hesitate; still, after exchanging a few witticisms on the subject with Boyet and Biron, permits them, at the king's request, to exhibit their talents. She

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and her companions, however, utterly refuse to tread a measure with them; but in spite of this refusal, the king and his friends manage to lead aside the ladies wearing their respective tokens, whom they, therefore, naturally suppose to be the objects of their love. In this part of the scene the king is paired with Rosaline, the princess with Biron, Longaville with Katharine, and Dumain with Maria, and each lady proceeds to lead her lover on and flout him wittily. All four suitors finally depart, having derived little satisfaction from this coveted interview, although each has manfully tried to make the depth of his attachment clear.

Boyet, the amused spectator of these asides, wisely remarks 'the tongues of mocking wenches are as keen as is the razor's edge invisible,' and when the Russians have gone, laughingly compares them to tapers 'with your sweet breaths puff'd out,' before each lady describes how her swain proposed to her. They laugh merrily over all the speeches, but, convinced the suitors will soon reappear, retire to their tents to remove their masks, and restore the borrowed tokens to their rightful owners. They intend, however, to continue the game, by facetiously describing to the king and his companions the ridiculous mummers who have just visited them.

While they are still in their tents, the King of Navarre returns with his three companions, dressed as usual, and inquires of the chamberlain where the princess may be? After courteously rejoining she is in her tent, Boyet hastens thither to announce to his mistress that the King of Navarre craves audi-

ence. During his absence, Biron, who has repeatedly exchanged witticisms with the chamberlain, remarks that this fellow 'pecks up wit as pigeons pease, and utters it again when God doth please,' a very good sample of much of the wit in this play.

In a few moments the princess reappears, followed by her ladies, and, after returning the king's greeting, refuses his tardy invitation to enter the park, insisting she cannot be a party to his breaking his vows. Besides, she avers she has not been dull, and, to prove it, describes how they have just been entertained by 'a mess of Russians!' Then Rosaline exclaims that throughout the hour these men spent with them, they 'did not bless us with one happy word,' a cutting remark resented by Biron, who returns that her wit 'makes wise things foolish.' This proves the signal for a new sparring match, in the course of which Rosaline routs Biron utterly by revealing that she and her companions saw through their disguise. Finding himself detected, Biron promises never again to try and deceive Rosaline, but invites her to bruise him with scorn, confound him with a flout, thrust her sharp wit quite through his ignorance, and cut him to pieces with her keen conceit!

Meanwhile, the king having also craved the princess' pardon, she bids him confess what he whispered in his lady's ear when last he was here? When Navarre rejoins how he assured her 'that more than all the world' he did respect her, the princess asks whether he will reject that lady's hand

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in case she claims him? Hearing him swear, 'Upon my honour, no,' the princess summons Rosaline, and bids her state exactly what her Russian suitor whispered in her pretty ear. When Rosaline repeats Navarre's speech, word for word, his amazed majesty exclaims he never swore love to Rosaline, but to the princess, who wore his token!

Thereupon the princess drily informs him how on that day Rosaline wore his jewels, and he, turning to Biron, vows some 'carry tale' must have betrayed their secret. They are just accusing the chamberlain of doing so; and the whole matter is barely cleared up, and the Russians forced to acknowledge they have been defeated in a brave and merry tilt, when Costard awkwardly enters upon the scene, inquiring whether they would like to see the Nine Worthies, who have come? As three men only have entered, Biron playfully inquires where the nine may be, only to hear the simple Costard assure him that three times three is nine, for each man will take three parts. To tease him, Biron tangles him up with questions he cannot understand. Undeterred by all this, Costard demands again whether the company are ready to see the Nine Worthies, volunteering that he is to play the part of 'Pompion the Great.' Gracious permission being granted the Worthies to appear, the clown hurries out, while the king murmurs this man will surely disgrace them; but Biron comforts him with the assurance it will be good policy to let the ladies see a worse show than that presented by 'the king and his company.' Besides, the princess insists

seeing the production, as 'that sport best
es that doth least know how.'

moment later Don Armado enters, and, after
rsing a while apart with the king, hands him
er. Meanwhile the princess wonderingly asks
whether this man serves God, for his speech
bombastic and involved that it proves almost
elligible. When Armado disappears, assur-
hem the schoolmaster is 'exceeding fantastical,'
prepare for the appearance of the promised

Worthies. Costard, the first player, en-
on the scene, tricked out as Pompey, and has
ly uttered a few words of his speech when the
berlain contradicts him, and soon succeeds in
ing him out. Such is Costard's confusion, that
nally piteously entreats the princess to say
ks Pompey,' and thus grant him the privilege
ithdraw. To humour the rustic, the princess
ptly complies, and, Costard having vanished,
rate appears, personating Alexander. He, too,
guyed by Boyet and Biron that he is soon
ed to leave the scene.

ie rustic now reappears, jealously remarking
urate represented Alexander no better than he
'ompey, and announcing that the schoolmaster
personate Judas Maccabeus, and his disciple,
ules. After introducing the infant Hercules,
mixture of Latin and English, Judas Mac-
s vainly tries to play his own part, but is pre-
d from doing so by numerous interruptions on
art of the spectators, whose unkind remarks
him away in despair before he has finished

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his speech. When the pedant comes on the stage as Hector, he, too, is mocked by all present, even by the princess, who claims she has been hugely entertained by their performance. Her commendations merely amuse the other spectators, who keep up their gibes, until Costard blurts out that Don Armado is not the hero he tries to appear, but merely a good for nothing wretch, unless he right poor Jaquenetta. Such an accusation results, naturally, in a vehement quarrel, which the gentlemen enjoy, until their attention is diverted.

The interruption is caused by the arrival of a French courtier, who bears so sober a face that even before he can voice his message the princess exclaims her father must be dead! Such being, indeed, the case, Biron dismisses the Worthies, who seem glad to escape without further ado, although Armado mutters he will 'right himself like a soldier.' The king now tenderly implores the princess to tarry in Navarre a while longer, but she assures him they must start for home that very evening. Then, with courteous thanks for his fair entertainment, which her 'new-sad soul' will not allow her to mention any further, she bids him farewell.

The King of Navarre, who regrets her visit should have been marred by bad news, vows he will not annoy her at present with 'the smiling courtesy of love,' although he fully intends to renew his 'holy' suit later on. It is, as Biron assures her, for her sake and that of her fair companions, that the king and his friends have violated their oaths, a fact of which the princess is fully aware, all the letters they

have forwarded having been duly received. Still, as it is not fitting to answer love missives at present, the princess gravely bids her suitor show his constancy by retiring into a hermitage for a year, spending his time there, remote from the pleasures of the world, and promising to reward him at the end of that period, in case he still feels the same devotion for her. Meanwhile, she will pass the year mourning for her parent's death. Such a term of probation seems neither too long nor too hard a test for Navarre's love, for he solemnly rejoins: 'If this, or more than this, I would deny, to flatter up these sudden powers of mine with rest, the sudden hand of death close up mine eye!'

Meantime, turning to Rosaline, Biron entreats an answer to his suit, only to be told that if he wishes to obtain her favour, he must spend a twelve-month tending the sick. Dumain is bidden wait a year, grow a beard, and prove he is to be trusted, while Maria coyly promises at the end of the year to lay aside her mourning and reward 'a faithful friend.'

When Biron, unsatisfied, inquires from Rosaline exactly what he is to do, this lady informs him that, before she ever saw him, she had been told he was a man 'replete with mocks, full of comparisons and wounding flouts.' She, therefore, enjoins upon him to 'weed this wormwood' from his fruitful brain if he would please her, and use his wit only 'to enforce the painted impotent to smile,' and cheer and divert those who are in pain. At first Biron exclaims what she requires is an impossibility, but Rosaline

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urges him to make the effort, and thus learn that 'a jest's propriety lies in the ear of him that hears it, never in the tongue of him that makes it.'

When the ladies again express regrets and farewells, the King of Navarre and his friends assure them they will escort them part way, and all are about to leave the scene, when Don Armado announces they have not heard him vow to turn farmer for Jaquenetta's sake, and have missed the best part of his entertainment, the dialogue in praise of the owl and the cuckoo. To gratify Don Armado, the king orders him to present the dialogue; whereupon schoolmaster, curate, disciple, and clown return to the scene, respectively personating Winter and Spring, the owl and the cuckoo. This part of the play consists in a graceful spring song with a coarse refrain, and a descriptive ditty of winter's cold, during which the owl chants his mournful song.

The curtain falls after the last rustic refrain, and just as the pedant wisely remarks that 'the words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo!' Then the king and ladies depart in one direction, while the extempore actors vanish in the other.

THE WINTER'S TALE

ACT I. When the curtain rises for the first act on an antechamber in Leontes' palace, in Sicilia, we overhear his councillor Camillo talking with a follower of the King of Bohemia. They are discussing the meeting between their masters, who, after having been brought up together, and separated for years, have been enjoying a renewal of their former friendship. They also mention the little prince of Sicilia, Mamillius, who promises to become a fine man, although at present merely an engaging child.

The second scene is played in a state apartment of the same palace, where Leontes enters with his family, guests, and train, and where Polixenes, King of Bohemia, courteously states it is time to bid his host farewell, and return to his own kingdom. Although Leontes warmly urges his friend to prolong his sojourn, his entreaties prove vain, until he turns to his wife, Hermione, suggesting she try her skill. With grace and eloquence, Hermione, at his request, uses such persuasive arguments that Polixenes finally yields, and enters into sprightly conversation with her, describing his happy youth with her husband, and his grief at their long separation.

Meantime, Leontes, perceiving his wife's persuasions have proved more efficacious than his own, ex-

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claims she never spoke to better purpose save when he wooed her, and she consented to become his wife! This praise so elates Hermione that she prizes herself happy in having spoken twice to such good purpose that she earned a royal spouse, and a worthy friend. Her innocent joy, however, kindles the jealousy of Leontes, who suddenly fancies she is speaking too warmly of their guest. With keen suspicion he begins watching wife and guest, pretending meanwhile to play with his boy, and soon concludes they have some secret understanding. This discovery causes him such jealous pangs, that, seizing Mamillius, he questions whether he is his offspring? Although the child's marked resemblance to himself clearly proves his legitimacy, Leontes nevertheless deems his wife faithless, and frowns so portentously that he rouses the wonder of his guest, who asks Hermione what can cause her husband's irritation?

Urged to speak by wife and friend, Leontes pretends to have been dreaming over the past, when he, too, was a mere lad. Then he asks whether Polixenes loves Florizel as dearly as he does Mamillius, whereupon the King of Bohemia enthusiastically declares his boy makes 'a July day short as December,' for him. A moment later, Leontes bids Hermione, if she loves him, show their guest all courtesy, and considers her unsuspecting obedience such hypocrisy that he mutters she is wooing his guest beneath his very eyes. He, therefore, grimly watches them out of sight, speaks roughly to his boy, and murmurs that wives have often proved faithless,

at he is suffering the usual lot of man-

is Leontes' state of raging jealousy that it is the child; and when the lad has gone, the turns to Camillo, his counsellor, and remarks that he is going to stay. Because Camillo replies that he is only on account of Hermione's entreaties, Leontes' husband fancies he is already a laughing-stock to the Sicilians. Drawing Camillo apart, however, he accuses him of being a coward or faithless. On the latter suspicion the counsellor can truthfully deny. Still, knowing his master's nature, he calmly bids Leontes point out in what way he has disgraced, promising to atone for his shortcomings as soon as possible. But, when Leontes expresses his suspicions of the honour of guest and wife,

he waxes indignant that so noble a lady should be traduced. This causes Leontes to demand whether 'whispering is nothing?' But when he describes the actions of his wife and guest from a jaundiced point of view, Camillo rejoins that he is suffering from a diseased imagination, and offers to cure it betimes, lest the complaint become dangerous.

In his wrath at being misunderstood, Leontes accuses Camillo with lying, adding that he himself has been blind for months, during which his guests have systematically deceived him. Suddenly he orders Camillo to poison his guest, and to save his honour; so, seeing him determined to do so, Polixenes, and dreading lest he entrust the matter to some one else, Camillo pretends to con-

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sent, after providing, as he fancies, for the queen's restoration to favour. Warmly 'thanking Camillo, and assuring him that by this deed he will win half his master's heart, Leontes adds the grim threat that, in case he does not obey, he will lose his life!

No sooner has Leontes left the room than Camillo muses upon Hermione's sad plight, and his own quandary, being compelled to turn poisoner or forfeit life. Even if others, similarly placed, have stricken down anointed kings, he feels he cannot soil his hands with such a crime, so decides to leave home. Just then Polixenes joins him, remarking that he seems to have fallen suddenly out of favour at the Sicilian court. He relates how Leontes has just passed him, with such looks of scorn that he was barely recognisable. Then, perceiving Camillo is aware of the reason for this strange conduct, Polixenes urges him to reveal all he knows. After some demur, Camillo advises the King of Bohemia to leave Sicilia secretly, because his host intends to slay him for making love to his wife. On hearing this absurd charge, Polixenes indignantly refutes it, and conscious of irreproachable conduct, declares this is 'the greatest infection that e'er was heard or read!'

When Camillo explains that his master has sworn his guest shall die, and has forced upon him a cruel alternative, Polixenes accepts his suggestion that they slip away together at nightfall, and, embarking on his waiting ship, escape from a land where it is no longer safe for them to sojourn. After promising

Camillo a warm welcome in Bohemia, Polixenes expresses compassion for the queen, whom, however, he dares not try to defend, lest he increase Leontes' jealous suspicions.

ACT II. When the curtain rises on the second act, we see a room in Leontes' palace, where Hermione and her attendants are playing with Mamillius, who, like all the poet's children, is a frightfully precocious lad. The ladies talk to him and before him as if he were grown up, teasing him in particular in regard to the coming brother or sister, who will soon supplant him in his mother's affections. Preferring Hermione to all the rest, the boy finally sits down beside her, and, after stating that 'a sad tale's best for winter,' volunteers to tell one of his own.

He has scarcely begun whispering it, when Leontes angrily enters with Antigonus,—his chief adviser,—and several retainers. He has just heard of the flight of Polixenes, who was seen vanishing behind the pines in Camillo's company, and traced to the vessel now disappearing from sight, and taking them beyond his reach. This report duly confirms Leontes in the belief that Camillo has betrayed him, and was party to his wife's wrong-doing.

Snatching his boy from Hermione's arms, he hisses it is fortunate she never nursed him, and when she wonderingly inquires whether he can be joking, orders the child removed from her custody. Then, after decreeing she shall never see Mamillius again, he sends her off to prison, accusing her of infidelity! Amazed by such a charge, Hermione

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proudly rejoins that had a villain said so, he would be base indeed, ere she humbly assures her angry spouse he is mistaken. But Leontes, too jealous to hear reason, goes on reviling her, although she realizes he will be sorely grieved when he comes to the 'clearer knowledge,' that he has disgraced her without cause.

Unwilling to listen to her, Leontes banishes her to prison, where she entreats some of her women may accompany her, as she will soon need their care. Having obtained this favour, Hermione goes off to her cell without further protest than that she hopes, for the first time in her life, to see her husband sorry!

Horried by the scene they have just witnessed, the lords, headed by Antigonus, now implore their monarch not to act rashly, reminding him that he attacks his own reputation as well as that of his wife and heir. When one of them offers to lay down his life in proof of Hermione's innocence, Antigonus adds he will never trust his own consort again, if the queen has failed in her duty. These protests only exasperate Leontes, who insists upon carrying out his revenge in his own fashion, reiterating that the flight of Polixenes and Camillo proves their guilt. When the courtiers feebly suggest he should seek advice on so weighty a question, Leontes says he has sent messengers to Apollo's temple at Delphi, and that their return with a sealed oracle will settle the matter. Hearing this, the lords are reassured, for they feel certain the gods will protect Hermione's innocence.

We are next transferred to the prison, where Paulina, wife of Antigonus, has come to visit Hermione. When she asks for the jailor, he promptly appears, but only with difficulty yields to her entreaties sufficiently to allow her to see one of the queen's attendants. The jailor, in introducing Emilia, announces he will have to be present at their conference, as the king has given orders that the prisoners be constantly watched. In this momentous interview Emilia reveals how her poor mistress, shaken by past emotions, has prematurely given birth to a little daughter, and relates how she welcomed her new treasure with the pathetic cry, 'my poor prisoner, I am as innocent as you.'

The visitor, fully convinced of this fact, now sends word to Hermione, that if she will only entrust the babe to her, she will carry it to the king, in hopes that its innocence will plead for its wronged mother. This suggestion is seized with delight by Emilia, because her mistress has expressed a great desire that some friend should take this very step. With the assurance that she will use all her eloquence to plead Hermione's cause, Paulina sends Emilia back to the queen, and bargains with the jailor to let the babe pass out of prison.

The curtain next rises in a room in the palace, where Leontes is brooding over his wife's supposed adultery and his own terrible wrongs. Suddenly, he sends a servant to inquire for his son, Mamillius being dangerously ill through fretting over his mother's disgrace. In fact, the child has been sinking so fast that his father is very anxious; but

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even while waiting for tidings, he reverts to the bitter thought that Camillo and Polixenes are laughing at him, and grimly adds they should not do so, could he only reach them!

It is while he is rejoicing that his wife, at least, is still in his power, that a clamour arises in the antechamber, where Antigonus and other lords try to prevent Paulina from entering. Browbeating them all, Paulina forces her way into Leontes' presence, closely followed by her protesting husband. Seeing her appear thus, Leontes discharges his wrath upon Antigonus, reminding him that he ordered Paulina should not be admitted under any pretext. When Antigonus tries to excuse himself under plea he could not prevent it, Leontes indignantly demands whether he is not able to rule his wife? But, without giving her husband a chance to reply, Paulina declares he cannot prevent her doing what honour requires, adding that she has come in the name of the good queen. Because Leontes starts angrily at this adjective, the tactless Paulina insists that, were she only a man, she would fight in Hermione's behalf; then, depositing the helpless babe at Leontes' feet, she reports that the good queen sends his little daughter for his blessing. Starting back from the bundle as if it contained some loathsome object, Leontes furiously orders it removed, thereby rousing Paulina's indignation to such a pitch, that she gives him a vehement piece of her mind. In his paroxysm of rage, Leontes roars that the child is to be removed, while Paulina just as emphatically forbids any one touching it, attacking Leontes and all who try to



Gabriel Max

FLORIZEL CHEERS PERDITA

Flo. "Lift up your countenance, as it were the day
Of celebration of that nuptial which
We two have sworn shall come."

er's Tale. Act 4. Scene 3.



silence her. But, although she persistently points out the child's resemblance to its father, and although Antigonus intercedes, Leontes refuses to acknowledge his offspring. His match in obstinacy, Paulina reiterates it is his, and leaves the apartment without it.

When she has gone, Leontes vents some of his anger upon Antigonus by ordering him to have the child burned alive under penalty of death. Hoping to free himself from blame, Antigonus calls the other lords to witness how he tried to prevent his wife from approaching the king, and all present exculpate him and intercede for the babe. Because Antigonus volunteers to pawn what little blood he has left to save the child, Leontes promises its life shall be safe provided Antigonus obeys his orders. Thus wringing a solemn oath from too trustful a servant, the cruel Leontes next bids Antigonus carry the babe off to some remote spot, and there abandon it, 'without more mercy, to its own protection and favour of the climate.' Bound by oath to fulfil these commands, Antigonus tenderly picks up the babe, and departs, fervently hoping wolves and bears,—who have occasionally shown tenderness for helpless human beings,—will prove more compassionate to it than its father. While he goes out, Leontes, still a prey to jealous delusions, grimly mutters he 'will not rear another's issue.'

A few moments after Antigonus' departure, a servant announces the return of the messengers from Delphi, bringing Apollo's sealed oracle. Their return, in twenty-three days' time, seems nothing short

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of miraculous to Leontes, who summons all present to witness the trial of his disloyal wife, for he declares he will be just, although his heart will be a burden to him as long as she lives.

ACT III. The third act opens just as the two Sicilian lords, sent in quest of the oracle, land in their native isle, and comment upon its delightful climate. Their minds are still full of their eventful journey, which, they hope, may prove so successful, that the sealed oracle they bring will free the queen from all suspicion.

The curtain next rises on the court of justice, where Leontes proclaims that, although it grieves him, he has been obliged to summon his wife to account for her conduct. Then, the prisoner appears, still weak and pale, supported by Paulina and other attendants, and an officer reads aloud an indictment accusing Hermione of conspiring with Camillo to slay her husband in order to marry Polixenes. Sadly rejoining it is useless to plead not guilty, since every word she utters is accounted a falsehood, Hermione bids them consider her past life, urging that if she ever said or did anything to give rise to suspicion, she wishes to know it, as she has always been faithful to the husband who accuses her so wantonly. When Leontes contemptuously retorts that criminals of her kind never lack the effrontery to excuse themselves, she rejoins that has never been one of her characteristics, adding that she loved Polixenes only as her duty required, and that her persuasions to him were made at her husband's request. As for Camillo, she warmly defends him as

an honest man, and states she cannot conceive why he secretly left court.

When Leontes angrily insists that she knew of Camillo's departure, Hermione fails to understand him, and when he repeats that she is 'past all shame,' she pathetically states she is unhappy enough, having been robbed of her place as wife, deprived of the sight of her son and of her new-born treasure, to call forth no further cruelty on his part. Then, in her desperation, she appeals to Apollo, and, while the messengers are sent for, exclaims that her father, the Emperor of Russia, would pity her were he to see her now!

At this juncture, the messengers appear, and solemnly testify that they have been to Delphi, and that the oracle they bring was handed to them, sealed, by Apollo's priest. In the presence of the assembly, an officer breaks the seal, and reads aloud a statement declaring Hermione chaste, Polixenes blameless, Camillo loyal, Leontes a jealous tyrant, the innocent babe his offspring, and decreeing he shall 'live without an heir, if that which is lost be not found.' In their relief at Hermione's acquittal, the lords give spontaneous thanks to Apollo, but Leontes, still too angry to credit the oracle, hotly declares it is a falsehood.

He is just ordering the trial to proceed as if no oracle had been given, when a servant rushes in, reporting that Mamillius has died, news which causes the father to realize that Apollo is angry, and the poor mother to swoon from grief. Vowing this last blow has killed her mistress, Paulina gladly obeys

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Leontes when he bids her bear the queen away and try and revive her.

Brought by calamity to his senses, Leontes now humbly begs Apollo's pardon for failing to respect his oracle, promises to be reconciled to Polixenes, to recall Camillo,—whose reputation he clears by revealing how basely he tried to induce him to poison his guest,—and to 'new woo' his queen. Scarcely has Leontes finished this recantation, when Paulina staggers in full of woe, to announce that Leontes' cruel behaviour has slain his wife! In reviling him, she pitilessly sets forth how many lives have been blasted by his jealousy, for she rightly ascribes to him not only the death of his son and that of his wife, but the exposure of his daughter. Unable to believe Hermione dead, Leontes forces Paulina to repeat her tidings and describe the tests which proved life extinct. Then, conscious of deserving the severe punishments Paulina ruthlessly calls down upon him, Leontes displays such grief that even this accuser pities him and begs his forgiveness, declaring she reviled him so hotly only because of her love for his wife and children. In his grief, Leontes begs to be taken where the corpses lie, vowing one grave shall hold them both, and that he will water it with his tears, for he is now a thoroughly repentant, broken-hearted man.

The curtain next rises on the desert coast of Bohemia, where Antigonus has just arrived with the unhappy babe he must abandon in obedience to the king's orders. Besides, in a vision which visited him on shipboard, Hermione herself bade him call the

babe Perdita, and expose her in Bohemia. Convinced by this apparition that Hermione is dead, and that Perdita is Polixenes' daughter—since she has been sent to his realm,—Antigonus lays down the babe, and has barely bidden it a touching farewell, when a huge bear comes toward him. Antigonus and this bear have scarcely rushed out of sight, when a shepherd appears, grumbling that youths should be suppressed between the ages of ten and twenty-three, as during that time they are prone only to mischief. While talking thus, he stumbles across the abandoned babe, whom he deems the illegitimate offspring of some youthful couple.

While he is investigating his find, his son,—who is dubbed a clown in the play,—rejoins him, crying he has just beheld two awful sights, a bear devouring a stranger, who only had time to cry his name was Antigonus, and a ship sinking in a tempest before his very eyes! Then his father calls his attention to the babe, who is robed in rich garments, and has jewels and gold enough beside her to make them rich as long as they live. The father finally concludes to take the foundling home, while the son goes off to ascertain whether the bear has finished dining on Antigonus, and whether he has left any remains to be buried.

ACT IV. The fourth act opens with the apparition of Father Time, who proclaims that sixteen years have elapsed since the previous events, and that another turn of his glass will reveal how Leontes has repented of his jealousy, and how his daughter has grown up in Bohemia, where she is

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now beloved by Prince Florizel, although he deems her naught but a shepherd lass.

The curtain rises on Polixenes' palace, just as he is conversing with Camillo, who is anxious to return to Sicilia, now that he no longer need fear Leontes' wrath. During his sojourn in Bohemia, Camillo has been Polixenes' chief adviser, so he consents to postpone his return home, on hearing the King of Bohemia still needs his aid. It transpires that Polixenes is troubled by a report that his son is in love with a shepherdess, and that, disguised, he wishes to attend the sheep-shearing festival with Camillo, and thus discover whether the prince is seriously entangled.

We next see a road near the shepherd's cottage, along which strolls Autolycus, the peddler, singing a merry song. When it is finished, he murmurs that, having been born under the planet Mercury, he is justified in stealing all he can. Autolycus is the archetype of a merry rogue, and no sooner sees the clown, than he deems him a likely subject for his mischievous arts. Meanwhile, the clown is laboriously trying to calculate how much his fleeces will bring, and to remember all the articles his adopted sister bade him purchase for the sheep-shearing festival, where all their neighbours are to be entertained.

As the clown draws near, Autolycus grovels on the ground, loudly calling for aid. When the innocent rustic compassionately approaches, he is implored to remove the sufferer's clothes, but avers that, dirty and ragged as they seem, they are better

than none. The rogue, however, rejoins that he has been robbed and beaten, his good apparel taken from him, and nothing but rags left to cover him. Not only does the gullible clown believe every word Autolycus says, but gently helps him to rise, little suspecting that while he does so his pocket is cleverly picked. After comforting Autolycus,—who tells a most extraordinary tale,—the clown goes off to do his errands, while the rascal congratulates himself upon having robbed him, and having learned about the sheep-shearing feast, where he will be able to practise some of his arts. He, therefore, leaves the scene, singing how ‘a merry heart goes all the day, your sad tires in a mile-a.’

We are now transferred to the shepherd’s holding, where Prince Florizel, in guise of a rural swain, is wooing Perdita, who playfully tries to turn aside his compliments. When she states, however, that she trembles lest his father should discover them by accident, and resent all this secrecy, Florizel avers that the gods, themselves, assumed disguises, and quotes instances where deities transformed themselves into beasts. Besides, he is so earnest in his wooing that he tells Perdita, if he cannot be hers, he will never marry at all, and implores her not to look sad when so many guests are coming, but to wear as cheerful a countenance as if this was to be their wedding day.

A host of shepherds and shepherdesses now come trooping in, the disguised Polixenes and Camillo among them. Ushering in his guests fussily, the old shepherd chides his adopted daughter for not being

everywhere at once, like his wife on similar occasions, and bids her welcome the strangers. With modest grace, Perdita offers the strangers flowers, and Polixenes, seizing this opportunity, begins to converse with her, pointing out that different kinds of flowers do not blend together successfully. Although only half understanding his veiled allusions, the maiden lovingly discourses about her garden, disclosing, while doing so, the delicacy and purity of her mind. Her talk not only enraptures Florizel, who hovers close beside her, but wrings from Polixenes the admission that she is 'the prettiest low-born lass that ever ran on the green sward,' and that all she says and does, smacks 'of something greater than herself, too noble for this place.' This opinion is shared by Camillo, who happily dubs Perdita a 'queen of curds and cream,' ere the music strikes up and the young people present engage in a dance.

Meanwhile, their elders step aside to watch this performance, the old shepherd garrulously informing Polixenes that the swain with whom his daughter is dancing is deeply in love with her, and slyly adding that he does not think there is 'half a kiss to choose who loves the other best.' He also hints that the man who marries Perdita will be far better off than he expects, little dreaming that the youth he points out is Prince Florizel, and that his interlocutor is the king.

At this point, a servant enters, enthusiastically describing a peddler who has just arrived with choice wares. When this vendor is ushered in, he chants

the list of the goods he has for sale with all the gusto of the born bagman. Shepherds and shepherdesses crowd around him, chattering among themselves, calling out for various articles of apparel, and especially for ballads, for which they seem to have a particular fancy. Then, discovering one for three voices, set to a tune they know, they gaily sing it, ere the peddler renews the enumeration of his wares.

It is in the midst of this lively hubbub that the servant proclaims the arrival of a party of Satyrs, who enter dancing gaily, and indulge in mad jumps which excite great admiration among the spectators. Taking advantage of the general confusion, Polixenes now addresses his son,—who does not recognise him,—and remarks that when he was young, he lavished tokens upon his lady-love, whereas the young man has bought naught for Perdita. The prince proudly rejoins that his beloved ‘prizes not such trifles as these,’ but looks to him for gifts ‘lock’d up in his heart.’ Then, seizing Perdita’s hand, he calls the stranger guest to witness that he loves this fair damsel, who satisfies his every fancy. Polixenes admits that this declaration of love sounds genuine, and, hearing Perdita timidly confess she fully returns it, the old shepherd suggests that the young couple be betrothed, promising to bestow upon his daughter a portion equal to the swain’s.

The contract is about to be sealed when Polixenes interferes, reminding them it will not be legal unless the young man’s father consent. Still

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protected by his disguise, he asks whether Florizel's father is incapable or childish, only to hear the prince boast his sire enjoys better health and strength than most men of his age. When Polixenes suggests, that in that case, this father might feel offended should his son mate without consulting him, a discussion arises whether the match should be postponed. When the prince, however, insists upon an immediate betrothal, Polixenes suddenly reveals himself, declaring he will never allow this marriage, and angrily threatening to have Perdita's beauty marred, so she may no longer bewitch his offspring. It is breathing such terrifying threats that he leaves the scene.

The king having gone, Perdita wails that, although strongly tempted to remind Polixenes that 'the self-same sun that shines upon his court hides not his visage from their cottage but looks on all alive,' she will now return to her 'ewes and weep.' Meantime, the shepherd, upon whom it has dawned, at last, that the prince has been wooing his daughter, steals out to meditate over the disgrace which threatens him, while Florizel assures Camillo he is not at all afraid of his father. Deeming it wiser, Florizel, Perdita, and both shepherds avoid the king's sight until 'the fury of his highness settle,' Camillo suggests that they flee to Sicilia. By this time he feels satisfied that Perdita must be some fair princess, and declares that, when her birth becomes known, no further objection will exist to their union. For that reason he urges flight, offering all necessary aid, and pledging himself to use his influence to

bring Polixenes to a better frame of mind. Overjoyed with the prospect of escaping from his father's wrath, and especially of securing Perdita against the terrible fate threatening her, Florizel consents to depart, although he wonders how he will be received in Sicilia, when he appears there without such a train as befits his rank.

While Camillo and the prince indulge in an aside, the peddler appears, gleefully soliloquising upon the fashion in which he has picked pockets and fleeced the rustics, the sheep-shearing having proved a profitable field of action for him. As he concludes, Camillo states he will pave the way by letter for Florizel's arrival in Sicilia, and that King Leontes will doubtless plead his cause with Polixenes. Then, becoming aware of Autolycus' presence, Camillo suggests that he and the prince change garments, which they immediately do, and that Perdita, in disguise, hurry down to the seashore to embark. Although he fancies Polixenes will pursue the fugitives, Camillo intends to accompany him, as this will give him the desired opportunity to bestow good advice upon him, and revisit his native land, for whose sight he has 'a woman's longing.'

The rogue, after listening attentively to all that is said in his presence, and watching Florizel, Perdita, and Camillo depart, shrewdly concludes the prince is meditating some iniquity, which he will further by keeping it secret. Then, the shepherd and his son re-enter, the youth urging his father to tell the king that Perdita is only a foundling, and

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thus divert royal wrath from their heads. Overhearing them state they are bound for the palace to exhibit the garments found with Perdita, the rogue, who has uttered sundry asides, suddenly volunteers to accompany the rustic pair thither. They gladly accept this offer, as his clothes proclaim him a man of wealth and influence, a delusion he diligently fosters. But, after wringing from the simpletons the admission that there is a secret connected with Perdita which they alone can reveal, the rogue so intimidates them with descriptions of the tortures awaiting them, that they consent to follow his advice. He, therefore, proposes to smuggle them secretly on board of the prince's ship, and there,—for a consideration,—to arrange that their confession be graciously heard. This bargain concluded, Autolycus sends the shepherd and his son on ahead, and follows them, exclaiming Fortune will not allow him to be honest!

ACT V. The fifth act opens in Leontes' palace, where one of his lords tells him that, after long years of penance, he should 'do as the heavens have done,' and forgive himself. Leontes' sadness, however, is too deep-seated for such consolations, so he assures this courtier that, remembering Hermione's perfections, and his wrongs toward her, no joy remains for him in this world. This sad admission is overheard by Paulina, who rejoins that even if Leontes were to take the perfections of all the women in the world and mass them together, he could never create so perfect a wife as the one he killed, a statement which renews his remorse.

When a courtier suggests that, as the king has no heir, he should cease mourning, and marry some new companion with whom he might spend happy days, Paulina, displeased by his advice, again urges no woman would equal Hermione, and that such a move would be vain, since the oracle asserted Leontes would have no heir until the lost child were found. Because the king has not forgotten his wife, and wishes he had followed honest Paulina's advice sooner, he now swears he will never marry, until he can find a woman so like Hermione that he cannot detect any difference between them.

They are still conversing, when the announcement is made that Prince Florizel, son of Polixenes, has landed in Sicilia with his princess, and begs to be received. This unexpected arrival amazes Leontes, who is further surprised to learn the prince is accompanied only by his wife, a princess whom the messenger enthusiastically describes as 'the most peerless piece of earth that e'er sun shone bright on,' thereby rousing Paulina's ever ready jealousy on Hermione's behalf.

The moment seeming inauspicious for dwelling upon the perfections of his dead wife, Leontes proposes to forget his own griefs by welcoming the newcomers. He, therefore, bids some of his courtiers go and get them, and when Paulina murmurs that Prince Florizel and Mamillius were just of the same age, sorrowfully exclaims, 'thou know'st he dies to me again when talk'd of.' A moment later Florizel and Perdita are ushered in and warmly greeted by Leontes, who concludes the

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prince's mother was a faithful wife, as his strong resemblance to his father leaves no-doubt in regard to his parentage. Then, bidding his guests welcome, Leontes warns them they have come to a sorrowful court, for he has lost two children, who, had they lived, would have been just their age. When he proceeds to inquire for Polixenes, Florizel states how his father sent him first to Africa to secure his princess, then hither to Sicilia to visit his friend, his suite meanwhile returning to Bohemia.

Leontes has just invited the young couple to linger with him as long as they please, when a lord hurries in, bringing greetings from Polixenes, and summoning Leontes to 'attach his son, who has his dignity and duty both cast off,' by fleeing from Bohemia with a shepherd's daughter! On hearing these words, Leontes eagerly inquires where the King of Bohemia may be, and is amazed to learn he has just landed in Sicilia, but is detained by a sudden encounter with Perdita's father and brother.

Concluding Camillo has betrayed him, Prince Florizel reviles him, while Perdita, who has been silent hitherto, wails that spies have been set upon them to prevent the celebration of their marriage! These words revealing that they are not yet united, Leontes inquires whether Perdita is really the daughter of a king? As Florizel only rejoins she will be when she is his wife, Leontes informs the youth he has been undutiful, and regrets his choice is not 'so rich in worth as in beauty.' At these words Florizel implores the humbled Perdita to remember that, although Fortune pursues them, their love is unal-

terable, and, turning to Leontes, begs him to plead in their favour, for his father will grant any favour his friend asks. Fascinated by Perdita, Leontes exclaims he would fain ask for her himself, when Paulina hastens to remind him that the queen at Perdita's age was even more lovely. Insisting that Perdita strangely reminds him of his dead wife, Leontes volunteers to go and meet Polixenes, for he now feels equally friendly toward him and toward his son.

It is in front of Leontes' palace that a dialogue next takes place between Autolycus and a gentleman, the peddler eagerly asking whether his interlocutor was present when the shepherd related his story, and exhibited what he had found in the bundle with the abandoned babe? The courtier whom he questions admits that the king and Camillo were amazed, and when another of his companions appears, eagerly inquires of him whether any further discoveries have been made? The newcomer joyfully proclaims that the oracle is fulfilled, for Leontes' daughter is found,—news which Paulina's steward soon confirms, stating that Hermione's mantle and jewels were easily recognised, as well as the letter signed by Antigonus. When asked whether he witnessed the meeting between the two kings, the courtier regrets having missed it, as the good steward informs him it was a grand sight, the encounter between the father and daughter having been touching in the extreme. After describing the thanks lavished on the shepherd,—who saved the babe from death,—he repeats the clown's account of Antigonus' death

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and of the wreck of his vessel, which explains why Paulina never received any tidings of the husband she mourned so faithfully. Still, it is said, the reunion was not unmarred by sorrow, for when Perdita learned how her beautiful mother died, she wept freely, and expressed a keen desire to know what she looked like when alive. Then only Paulina revealed she had a statue of Hermione, painted by Julio Romano, of such life-like fidelity that it might be mistaken for the living queen. As both father and daughter seemed anxious to view it, Paulina invited them and all the court to visit it in her country house on the morrow.

While the rest now leave, the peddler lingers upon the scene, congratulating himself upon having brought the old shepherd and his son to Sicilia, but regretting that seasickness prevented an earlier revelation of their secret, as he would then have reaped the benefit of Florizel's gratitude. While he is soliloquising, he is joined by the shepherd and his son, the latter glorying in the title of gentleman, which has just been bestowed upon him, and in regard to which he accepts the peddler's mock homage.

The last scene is played in the chapel of a deserted house, which Paulina has secretly visited twice a day for years. The royal party are ushered in, while the king is thanking his hostess for all she has done for him and his, and expressing eagerness to behold her wonderful statue. After assuring him that this work of art is so lifelike it has to be kept apart, Paulina draws aside a curtain, and reveals the living Hermione, standing on a pedestal, as if she

were a statue. Such is the effect produced, that silence reigns, and it is only when invited to express his opinion that Leontes, full of remorse, implores the image to speak, were it even to chide him. Then he pronounces it a perfect likeness of his queen, although somewhat older than when he last saw her. Hearing this, Paulina avers the sculptor wisely represented Hermione as she would have been had she lived among them until now.

While lost in contemplation of this wonderful likeness, Leontes murmurs Hermione looked thus when he wooed her, and that he is more remorseful than ever for his vile suspicions. Meanwhile, Perdita, also overcome by the sight, craves permission to kiss the statue's hand, but Paulina objects that the colors are not yet dry, and that hence it cannot be touched. While Camillo and Polixenes are offering consolations to the grieving Leontes, Paulina tries to draw the curtain, saying that the statue has so impressed them that presently they will imagine it is moving. But Leontes beseeches her to let him gaze upon his wife's image a while longer, exclaiming that the blood seems to circulate in its veins, and that its lips and eyes are alive. When Paulina again tries to hide her masterpiece, he restrains her, declaring he must embrace his wife, although Paulina forbids. Then, seeing she cannot entice him away, the hostess suddenly exclaims if he is sufficiently prepared for a great surprise, she will, by lawful magic arts, induce the statue to descend from its pedestal and take him by the hand.

Eager for such a revelation of magic power, Le-

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ontes urges her to make use of it; so, after soft music has been played, Paulina bids the statue step down among them. At her command Hermione advances toward them, silently offering her hand to Leontes, who no sooner touches it than he discovers it is warm! A moment later, his beloved wife is clasped in his arms, and Paulina assures the wondering Polixenes and Camillo that Hermione is indeed alive, although she has been deemed dead so many years.

The recognition between husband and wife over, Paulina urges Perdita to claim her mother's blessing, which blessing Hermione joyfully bestows, stating she has lived in hopes of seeing this beloved child, as Paulina has sustained her courage by constantly repeating Apollo's oracle.

The faithful Paulina now urges her guests to leave her and enjoy their happiness, for she alone still has cause to grieve, having just learned how her husband was devoured by the bear.

Unwilling that any one should sorrow while he is joyful, Leontes bestows Paulina upon the faithful Camillo, knowing two such worthy people will be happy together. Then, turning toward friend and wife, who dare not look at each other, he humbly begs their pardon for having suspected them of wrong-doing, welcomes his new son-in-law, and departs with all present, remarking that they will question each other at leisure, and thus make up the gap of time 'since first we were dissever'd.' With these words the curtain falls.

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

I. The curtain rises before Page's house, Justice Shallow, his cousin Slender, and the pastor, Sir Hugh Evans, are busy talking. Justice declares that in spite of their persuasion he will no longer be abused by Sir John Falstaff, and is supported in all he says by a show of local knowledge on his cousin's part. When Falstaff boasts he has signed 'Esquire' for the past hundred years, Slender avers all 'his success has gone before him' and 'all his ancestors that follow after him' can claim the same privilege, as he sports a coat of arms, in describing which he confuses 'luces' (a species of fish), with respect the Welsh parson characterises as a 'beast rather than man!'"

The conversation continues thus with malapropisms from Slender and quaint Welsh expressions on the part of Evans, who finally remarks he never saw a prettier girl than Mistress Anne Page, whom he describes as speaking 'small like a woman.' When this damsel is to inherit seven hundred pounds when seventeen, Evans suggests all further negotiations be dropped and a marriage arranged between her and Slender, who is not averse to a bride with such great expectations. All, therefore, decide

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to visit Master Page, although Shallow knows he will encounter there his foe, Sir John Falstaff.

A moment later, Page admits them, and, after exchanging greetings, thanks the Justice for sending him some venison. Closely imitating his cousin, who inquires about Mistress Page's health, Slender asks whether his host's greyhound won the last race? Unable to restrain his spleen any longer, Shallow now demands whether Sir John Falstaff is within, and is just insisting he has been wronged, when this knight joins them. In reply to his jocose inquiry whether the Justice intends to complain to the king, Shallow angrily rejoins that Falstaff has beaten his men, killed his deer, and broken open his lodge! These charges the unrepentant culprit doesn't deny, but impudently adds that he also broke Slender's head. The latter admits this fact, although claiming he owes a greater grudge to Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol, for carrying him off to the tavern, and picking his pockets while he was drunk. Turning to these men, who have entered with him, Falstaff demands whether this accusation is true? So they begin abusing and baiting their former victim, who blusters he will never get drunk again, as long as he lives, or will do so only in the company of God-fearing men, and not in that of knaves.

At that moment Anne Page brings in wine; and is closely followed by her mother and Mistress Ford. Overcome by the appearance of the beautiful maiden, Slander gets hopelessly tangled in his speech, while Falstaff jauntily offers to kiss Mistress Ford. Being invited to share the venison pasty, all now fol-

low Page out of the room, except Shallow, Slender, and Evans, who linger behind. The young suitor is ardently wishing he had his book of songs and sonnets with him, when his servant Simple appears, from whom he inquires where it may be? The matter of marriage is next discussed, Slender expressing his readiness to espouse Anne Page, although he will not admit he loves her. All he will do, is to promise to marry whoever his cousin selects, trusting that 'upon familiarity will grow more contempt,' an answer the Welsh parson deems eminently discreet.

The lady in question now re-enters, announcing dinner is on the table, and her father awaiting his guests; Shallow and Evans, therefore, enter the dining-room, while Simple draws aside. Because Slender hesitates to enter, Anne kindly states she cannot go in without him; but, while this suitor, blunderingly trying to be polite, reveals his paucity of wit, Page becomes impatient and appears in his turn to urge him to come in. After vain efforts to induce his hostess to precede him, Slender yields at last to her desires, remarking, 'I'll rather be unmannerly than troublesome.'

They have been in the dining-room only a short time when the Welshman comes out to bid Simple carry a letter to Mistress Quickly, housekeeper to Dr. Caius,—a woman well acquainted with Anne Page,—wherein he bespeaks her furtherance of Slender's suit. This done, the Welshman gleefully returns to partake of desert.

In the next scene we are transferred to the inn,

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where Falstaff is talking to his companions and host, all of whom greatly admire him. Unable longer to maintain four followers, Falstaff decides that Bardolph shall become a tapster, while he proposes to renew his exchequer by paying court to some rich ladies in town. Next he fatuously describes how both Mistress Ford and Mistress Page have gazed upon him with favour, and deems he can derive good entertainment from them, as they are ladies of means. To reach his ends, he has penned letters to them, which his page Robin is to deliver, and which, he feels confident, will speed his wooing.

Falstaff has barely gone out with the page to see his orders properly carried out, when Pistol and Nym determine to profit by these confidences,—Nym by revealing his master's scheme to Page, while Pistol does the same by Ford, whose jealous temperament is the talk of the town.

We next perceive a room in Dr. Caius' house, where Mistress Quickly, bustling about, orders the man-servant to watch for his master's coming, and promises to reward him with posset. When he has gone to earn it, she describes him to Simple,—who has just entered,—as a worthy man much 'given to prayer.' Then, inquiring who Simple may be, and learning he is sent by Slender, she induces him to describe his master, whose beard he terms 'a little yellow beard, a Cain-coloured beard.' Mistress Quickly has just expressed her readiness to favour Anne Page's new suitor, when the servant reports his master is coming; so not wishing her visitor to be seen,—for Dr. Caius also wishes to marry Anne,—

ress Quickly hides Simple in the closet, and then goes about, talking to her fellow-servant. Then, on coming in, bids his housekeeper get a box from the closet, which order she hastens to obey, congratulating herself upon the fact her master did not go in quest of it himself, and thus saves Simple.

Simple, broken English,—for he is a Frenchman,—converses with his housekeeper, ere he summons his man-servant to escort him to court. He is about to depart, when he suddenly remembers the simples in his closet, and, going to get them himself, finds Simple hiding there! The French doctor flies into such a rage that Mistress Quickly tells Simple is honest, and came here to bring her to a sage. Little by little it transpires that Simple was despatched by the Welsh parson to bespeak Mistress Quickly's offices in Slender's behalf, as he is anxious to marry Anne Page. This discovery annoys Caius, who, however, to his housekeeper's surprise, merely sits down to write a letter. Then, his business finished, the peppery doctor orders Simple to deliver it to Sir Hugh, whom he is challenging, whose throat he proposes to cut for meddling with the lady he loves. After Simple has departed on his errand, Mistress Quickly, hoping to pacify her master, assures him Anne loves him, and sends him depart with his man.

Left alone, Mistress Quickly murmurs she knows more about Anne's mind than any other woman in the house, and doesn't fancy her master will ever suspect her! She is still talking to herself on this sub-

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ject, when Fenton appears, also in regard to Anne, who, Mistress Quickly assures him, loves him dearly. In proof of this she playfully asserts Anne conversed with her for an hour in regard to the wart above his eye, and says she never laughs so heartily as when in her company, although, of late, Anne has been inclined to 'allicholy and musing.' Mistress Quickly's report so encourages Fenton, that he bestows a munificent tip upon her, begging her to plead his cause whenever the opportunity offers. He has no sooner gone, however, than Mistress Quickly asserts Anne does not love him at all, but that it behooves her to make as much profit as she can out of the young lady's numerous suitors.

ACT II. The second act opens in Mistress Page's house, just as she wonders that having escaped love-letters in her youth, she should be favoured with them now. She then reads aloud a missive, in which Falstaff professes great devotion, winding up his amorous tirade with the ridiculous rhyme, 'Thine own true knight, by day or night, or any kind of light, with all his might for thee to fight!' This epistle both amuses and angers Mistress Page, who wonders how the fat knight dares address her thus, having seen her only a few times. Indignant, yet wishing to punish Falstaff for such impudence, she decides to make him an object of general ridicule.

She is still pondering over the affair, when Mistress Ford enters, all in a flutter, she, too, having received a love-letter, the exact counterpart of the one her friend holds in her hand. After a few preliminaries, Mistress Ford blurts out her secret, and



Margit Loewe

FALSTAFF CROWDING INTO THE BASKET

Fal. "I love thee, and none but thee; help me away; let me creep in here, I'll never——"

Merry Wives of Windsor, Act 3, Scene 3.



bits her letter, which Mistress Page is amazed to find a mere copy of her own. She, therefore, shows both missives beneath her friend's eyes, and beseeches her aid in securing revenge. Although more willing, Mistress Ford knows she will have to be cautious, for her husband is jealous, a fault from which Mistress Page joyfully acquits her spouse.

They have just retired to consult over plans for the evening, when Page and Ford enter, conversing with Pistol and Nym, who have evidently been betraying Falstaff's amorous plans. Because he is jealous, Falstaff fumes over the tidings and dismisses Pistol in the evening, while Page calmly refuses to believe anything detrimental to his wife. Just as Ford decides to seek Falstaff and demand satisfaction, the women enter, and Mistress Ford tenderly inquires why her husband seems so melancholy?

In the meantime, Mistress Page perceives Mistress Ford quickly coming, and whispers to her friend they can use her as 'messenger to this paltry knight.' They, therefore, warmly welcome the newcomer, who has come to visit Anne, and lead her away, imploring her to grant them an hour's conversation. Then, when she having gone, the men resume their discussion, Ford emitting all manner of jealous suspicions, while Page feels confident Falstaff will enter nothing further than sharp words, if he attempts to make love to his wife.

They are still talking, when the innkeeper enters, followed by Justice Shallow, with whom he is laughing over the coming duel between the Welsh parson and the French doctor. After inviting Ford

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and Page to witness it, the host reveals he has appointed different places to both principals, whose rage will be part of the fun. Seizing this opportunity, Ford now draws the host apart to question him in regard to Falstaff, while Page does the same with Shallow. Then, under pretext of a jest, Ford persuades the innkeeper to present him to Falstaff as Master Brook, that very day.

When all the rest have left, Ford concludes that, although Page trusts in his wife's virtue, he mistrusts his spouse so sorely that he will sound the fat knight in disguise, for he argues 'if I find her honest, I lose not my labour; if she be otherwise, 'tis labour well bestowed!'

The curtain next rises on a room in the Garter Inn, where Falstaff refuses to loan Pistol any more funds, boasting how he has saved him and Nym from prison many times, and forgiven their many peculations. It soon transpires, however, that this forgiveness was not disinterested, since he shared in the profits thus made.

Falstaff is hotly reviling his man, when the page reports a woman wishes to speak to him. A moment later Mistress Quickly enters, and begs for a private hearing. When Falstaff carelessly remarks he has no secrets from his men, Mistress Quickly draws him a trifle aside, and informs him that, although Dr. Caius' housekeeper, she has been sent by Mistress Ford to say his letter has been received. Her husband will be absent from home between ten and eleven on the morrow, when he can view the picture 'he wots of.' This message is delivered with

an infinite amount of repetition, sly innuendo, and many voluble assurances that Mistress Ford could have all the lovers she pleased, were not her husband so terribly jealous.

Delighted with the appointment,—which he ascribes to his surpassing charms,—Falstaff is doubly triumphant when Mistress Quickly proceeds to state Mistress Page also entrusted a message to her. Still, for a moment he fears the two ladies may have confided in each other, and is, therefore, much relieved when Mistress Quickly assures him such is not the case. Then she delivers Mistress Page's message to the effect that, if he will lend her his page, she will send him word whenever her husband is away. This scheme delights Falstaff, who feels so confident of soon replenishing his funds that he richly rewards Mistress Quickly ere she leaves with his page.

Left alone, Falstaff plumes himself upon his conquests, until interrupted in these self-gratulations by the announcement that Master Brook is below, asking to drink with him. Such an invitation is too tempting for Falstaff to refuse, so he orders Master Brook shown upstairs, and is still chuckling over his bright prospects when Ford enters, in disguise. With the utmost affability Brook now invites Falstaff to drink, and soon exhibits a bag of money which he offers to share with the knight, as he does not know how to dispose of his superfluous funds. This offer proves so acceptable, that Falstaff, in a friendly mood, inquires what he can do in return? Pretending to confide in this new friend, Brook now

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admits he is deeply in love with Mistress Ford, whose jealous husband permits no one to approach her.

On hearing that Brook has never even addressed the lady, Falstaff, proud of his successes, reveals how he has made an appointment with her, and promises to use his influence in furthering his host's suit. This assurance charms Brook, who feels certain if the lady will once step down from her pedestal of virtue, he will have an easy time hereafter. In his satisfaction, he promises Falstaff a rich reward if he undermines her virtue, and little by little learns all about the coming rendezvous. When Falstaff finally leaves him, promising to meet him that evening and report success, Ford jealously raves over his wife's infidelity, vowing he will expose her, and dubbing Page 'a secure ass!'

In an empty field near Windsor, irate Dr. Caius and his second vainly await the Welsh parson. The Frenchman, while railing in broken English at his opponent, vows he will kill him as soon as they stand face to face, and is demonstrating the thrusts he means to use, when the innkeeper, Shallow, Slender, and the page appear. While the others have come to see the fight, Shallow's intention is to prevent the duel, for he pompously orders the doctor to follow him home and keep the peace.

Meantime, the host gleefully whispers to Page that Sir Hugh is awaiting the doctor's arrival in another meadow, and suggests their bringing him thither by a roundabout way, so as to prolong the fun. After some whispering this plot is settled,

so Page leads Shallow and Slender away, while the innkeeper entices Caius to Frogmore, under the pretext of meeting Mistress Anne, with whom he is in love.

ACT III. The third act opens in a field near Frogmore, where the Welsh parson, and his second Simple, are waiting for the doctor's coming. In his impatience and anger, the Welshman blusters and tries to beguile time by singing in the strongest of Welsh accents. Having gone to reconnoitre, Simple soon returns, volunteering that Dr. Caius is coming, whereupon the parson assumes a truculent bearing. Instead of the doctor, however, Page, Shallow, and Slender appear on the scene, and, while Page jocosely inquires why the parson stands there, sword in hand, Slender, who is trying to pose as a lover, bleats out at intervals, 'Sweet Anne Page.'

After some conversation, these actors are joined by the innkeeper, Caius, and his servant. The host now suggests that, instead of weapons, the champions fight their duel with their tongues, a feat they seem quite able to perform, and which becomes extremely comical, owing to their diverging accents. From their vituperation we learn that the innkeeper decoyed Caius hither to join Anne Page, and, when the antagonists discover they have been victims of a practical joke, they join forces to secure revenge.

In a street in Windsor, we see Mistress Page, closely following Falstaff's page, who is proud of being leader instead of follower. Joined by Ford, who suspiciously inquires where she is going, Mistress Page replies she is on her way to visit his wife,

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and when he jealously remarks that, were their husbands dead, they would doubtless marry, retorts they certainly would take other consorts. When she has gone with the page whom Falstaff loaned her, Ford wonders how his friend can so blindly allow his wife to keep thus close at hand a lad who doubtless carries messages to the knight.

While Ford is wondering how to surprise his wife in Falstaff's company, he sees the returning duellists and their friends appear. He, therefore, persuades them all to accompany him, an invitation Shallow and Slender decline, because they are to dine at the parson's to learn the answer to their proposal. Hearing this statement, the doctor swears Anne Page loves him, while the host opines that Fenton, being young and handsome, is more likely to have found favour in her eyes. Page, however, vows his daughter shall not marry without his consent, and says he disapproves of Fenton, because he is an associate of the Prince and Poins. Then he and the rest gladly follow Ford, who promises to show them a monster, while the host, alone, returns to the inn, preferring to spend the time drinking with Falstaff.

The curtain next rises in Ford's house, where the mistress, calling her two men-servants, orders them to bring in a huge clothes basket (a buck basket), which they set down as she directs. They are to carry it, as soon as she summons them, to a neighbouring meadow, and dump its contents into the muddy waters of the Thames. After repeating her instructions,—adding a warning to show no sur-

prise, should the basket weigh more than usual,— Mistress Ford dismisses these men, just as the page reports Falstaff at the back door.

After making sure the page has not revealed the fact that Mistress Page is in the house, Mistress Ford orders her suitor admitted, while her friend retires into the adjoining room. The hostess is just muttering they will teach Falstaff to distinguish good women from bad, when the fat knight strides in, grandiloquently exclaiming this is a blessed hour, and vowing he would like to make her 'my lady.' With coquettish arts, Mistress Ford leads the fat knight on to making ponderous compliments, and when she pretends to be jealous of the attentions he has shown Mistress Page, induces him to swear this lady is as hateful to him 'as the reek of a lime-kiln!' Just then the page screams that Mistress Page is at the door, and Falstaff deftly slips behind the arras, while Mistress Ford advances to welcome her friend. Reproaching her neighbour for harbouring a lover in her husband's absence, Mistress Page breathlessly exclaims that Ford is coming with a posse of friends to expose her! With pretended dismay, Mistress Ford confesses that she is, indeed, entertaining a visitor; so her friend, after some virtuous reproaches, suggests hiding the intruder in the huge clothes basket, since all the doors are guarded to prevent his escape.

Although Mistress Ford vows Falstaff is too large to be stowed away in such a receptacle, the knight bustles out of his hiding-place, vowing he can get in, and bespeaking their aid to conceal him. He then

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crowds into the basket, where they hastily cover him up with foul linen, before they summon the bearers who are to remove it. These men are just carrying off their burden, when Ford arrives, calling to his friends to follow him, and promising, in case he has brought them here fruitlessly, to be their laughing-stock and give them a treat. On meeting his servants with the basket, Ford angrily demands where they are carrying it, and when his wife answers 'To the laundress, forsooth,' he allows them to pass, ordering his companions to search the house and 'unkennel the fox!' He does this, notwithstanding Page's attempts to pacify him, and although both Caius and Evans wonder at the raging jealousy he displays.

Meantime the women are slyly enjoying the fun, not knowing what is most diverting, Falstaff's plight or Ford's rage. Then, hoping to secure further amusement, they plan to send Mistress Quickly to Falstaff to beg him to excuse the treatment he has received, and to invite him a second time. The details in regard to a new appointment are barely settled, when the searchers return, Ford raging not to have discovered the fat knight, and muttering that he bragged of what he could not compass. Pretending injured feelings, Mistress Ford berates her husband, while Page vows he should be ashamed of his suspicions.

Meantime, Caius and Evans, who have been foremost in the search, return averring no traces have been found of a lover, and that Ford must be suffering from a bad conscience. They, therefore, in-

sist he shall pay the agreed penalty, thus securing an invitation to breakfast for the morrow, with a promise of hawking to follow.

In a room in Page's house we next see Fenton, assuring Anne he has vainly tried to induce her father to listen to his suit. He states her father's main objections are his high birth, his association with the wild prince, and a suspicion that he is courting Anne for her money. When she inquires whether there is any truth in the latter accusation, Fenton loyally confesses that although he came wooing for mercenary purposes, he has been deeply ashamed of it since, having found her to be of more value 'than stamps in gold or sums in sealed bags!' Because he fervently assures her, 'tis the very riches of thyself that now I aim at,' Anne graciously bids him continue trying to obtain her father's consent, hinting, in case he does not obtain it, that she will run away with him.

Their conversation is interrupted by the arrival of Shallow, Slender, and Mistress Quickly, the Justice fussily bidding the lady to break off so dangerous a tête-à-tête, and give his cousin a chance to woo for himself. Slender, who has nothing to say, now approaches Anne Page, who disdainfully comments this is the suitor her father has chosen on account of his three hundred pounds a year! While Mistress Quickly monopolises Fenton's attention, Slender awkwardly tries to woo Anne, his courtship complacently watched by Shallow, who tries to further it by occasionally putting his oar in the conversation. But, Anne's abrupt inquiry in regard

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to his wishes so confuses Master Slender that he stammers 'little or nothing,' adding that his father and uncle can tell her better than he. Just then Page and his wife come in, the former pleased to see Slender beside his daughter, and both he and his wife inform Fenton their daughter is no match for a man of his rank, ere they invite Shallow and Slender into the other room. Though dismissed, Fenton lingers to impress upon Mistress Page how dearly he loves her daughter, and to bespeak her aid. This lady, however, favours Caius' suit, so she dismisses Fenton, coolly stating she will ascertain her daughter's feelings, but that they must both join Page, or he will be angry.

To secure Fenton's favour, Mistress Quickly now assures him this encouragement is due to her intervention, thus obtaining a new gratuity, together with a ring she is to deliver to Anne Page in his name. After he has gone, Dame Quickly sighs he has a good heart, and that she wishes all three suitors could secure the damsel, since she promised to aid them all. She does not, however, tarry long on the scene, as she has another message to deliver to Sir John Falstaff from the two married ladies.

We now return to the Garter Inn, where Falstaff is loudly calling for a drink to warm him after his wetting. In a fume he describes his uncomfortable plight in the basket, and his ducking in the river, where he would have drowned had not the water been shallow. He is greedily quaffing his liquor, when Mistress Quickly enters, and when she states she comes from Mistress Ford, he indignantly mut-

ters he has had ford enough! Volubly assuring him the lady was not to blame for his ducking, Mistress Quickly reports that Mistress Ford would like to see him between eight and nine on the morrow, when her husband will be away bird-hunting.

As this invitation flatters Falstaff's colossal vanity, he delightedly accepts it. He is alone, wondering why he has heard nothing of Brook—whose money he is lavishly spending—when this gentleman appears. In reply to his questions, Falstaff gives a boastful account of his visit to Mistress Ford, describing his escape in the basket, and thus causes the disguised husband to mutter in an angry aside that he has been badly cheated. Brook, however, manages to express regret for the sufferings which Falstaff vows he has undergone in his behalf, so the fat knight noisily protests he will be thrown in a volcano, rather than give up his efforts to outwit Ford. Then he reveals he has a second appointment, and hastens off to keep it, while Ford registers an oath to catch him without fail this time, as he does not propose being tricked again.

ACT IV. The fourth act opens in a street in Windsor, where Mistress Page is asking Dame Quickly whether Falstaff has already gone to keep his appointment with Mistress Ford, and whether he is angry at having been thrown into the Thames? Just then the Welsh parson—who is schoolmaster—comes along, announcing he is giving a holiday, so Mistress Page can take her little boy home. In hopes of having her maternal vanity gratified by an exhibition of her offspring's learning, Mistress Page

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beseeches the schoolmaster to question his pupil, and listens admiringly to her son's answers, upon which Mistress Quickly makes quaint comments. This extempore examination finished, the parson goes off, while the others betake themselves to Mistress Ford's.

We now behold a room in this dwelling, where Falstaff is graciously accepting his hostess' excuses, and appears overjoyed to learn that her husband is out of reach. He is about to begin his wooing, when, hearing the voice of Mistress Page, his hostess implores him to step into the adjoining room. On meeting her entering friend, Mistress Ford whispers that she must speak loudly enough to be heard in the next room, so in excited tones, Mistress Page exclaims how glad she is to hear the fat knight is not here, since Mr. Ford is again coming with friends to search the house and murder Falstaff, who, he has discovered, was carried out before in a clothes basket.

On learning her husband is near at hand, Mistress Ford wails she is undone, for the knight is with her, although she denied his presence a while ago. Mistress Page now suggests that Falstaff depart immediately, while Mistress Ford wonders whether they can make use of the same trick? Having heard every word, Falstaff appears, vowing nothing will ever induce him to get into that basket again! But, when he suggests escaping through the back door, Mistress Page warns him that Ford's brothers are posted there; and when he volunteers to climb up the chimney, Mistress Ford exclaims he would run

Great risk, as the hunters invariably discharge their pieces up the flue. Persuaded her husband will search every nook and corner, she wrings her hands in despair, until Mistress Page suggests a disguise. Then, only, Mistress Ford remembers her maid's aunt, the fat woman of Brentford, left clothes upstairs, which she bids Sir John hasten and don, while she finds a kerchief to tie round his head.

While Falstaff bustles off, Mistress Ford expresses a malicious hope her husband will meet the knight in this disguise, for he is so angry against the fat woman that he has promised her a good beating next time she enters his door. Then, assured the alarm is not a false one, and that Ford is really on his way, Mistress Ford decides to gain time by sending the clothes basket off again, and bustles off in search of linen. While she is absent, Mistress Page avers that their trickery is justified by Ford's absurd jealousy, and that they are merely determined to prove to their husbands that 'wives may be merry, and yet honest too.'

A moment later Mistress Ford hurries in with her men, whom she bids carry out the basket, setting it down quickly, should their master request them to do so. So they move off with the burden, gleefully commenting it is less heavy than the last time, just as Ford and his companions burst into the house. Seeing the fatal basket on its way out, Ford fancies he has secured his game, and swearing vehemently, makes the men set it down. In loud tones he then bids the rascal come forth, feverishly casting the linen hither and thither to discover

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the culprit concealed beneath it. His companions are deriding his vain efforts, when Mistress Ford comes into the room, and in reply to a marital tirade, declares her husband, as usual, is suspecting her without cause. Paying no heed to her, Ford continues his investigations, bidding his friends, meanwhile, search the house. On hearing this, Mistress Ford calls to Mistress Page and the old woman to come down, and when her husband suspiciously inquires who is upstairs, calmly rejoins it is the witch of Brentford.

Furious that his command should be disregarded, Ford seizes a stick which he lays lustily across the old woman's shoulders, ere he drives her out of doors. In vain Mistress Page and Mistress Ford remonstrate, the master of the house exclaims she deserves a beating for being a witch, and the school-master concludes he may be right, since women with beards are always suspicious!

To calm the jealous husband, his friends now scatter through the house, and while they search, Mistress Ford and Mistress Page chuckle over Falstaff's beating, feeling sure he will never wish to try love-assignments with them again. This time, however, they propose to confide the whole story to their husbands, and rejoice to think that Falstaff will be publicly shamed when his tricks are exposed.

In a room at the inn, we next hear Bardolph tell the host that some Germans want three of his horses, so as to go and meet a Duke, who wishes to retain all the rooms in his house. Delighted with the prospect of entertaining such a grandee, the

host supplies the horses, and promises to turn away all other guests.

We next return to Ford's house just as the search is concluded, and the wives, having made their confession, exhibit the two letters they received. While Page marvels that Falstaff should have so little wit as to send two missives exactly alike, Ford humbly begs his wife's pardon, promising never to suspect her again. To continue the sport, however, all four decide that another tryst be made with Falstaff, in the park, at midnight, although the parson doubts whether a man, who has been half drowned and sorely beaten, will accept a third invitation. Bidding their husbands devise ~~how~~ to treat Falstaff, once in their power, Mistress Ford and Mistress Page engage to beguile him into the park. Then they quote a local legend that the spirit of a former keeper, wearing horns and rattling a chain, prowls around one of the oaks.

They propose that Falstaff assume the guise of this hunter, and meet them there at midnight, and that Anne Page and a number of other young people, disguised as elves and fairies, suddenly emerge from the sawpit. These are all to surround Falstaff, sing songs, pinch him, and burn him with their lights, for having dared to venture within their realm. The schoolmaster volunteers to train and lead the children, while Ford procures the necessary disguises. Although Mistress Page murmurs that her daughter, in white, shall personate the queen of the fairies, Page mutters this will be the best opportunity for Slender to kidnap her. These prelim-

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inaries settled, Ford undertakes to visit Falstaff once more, in the guise of Brook, to find out whether he will keep the tryst. Then, the men having gone, 'the merry wives' prepare their message for Falstaff, which Mistress Ford departs to send. When she has gone, Mistress Page murmurs she will arrange matters so the French doctor can lead Anne away from the rest of the fairies, and marry her that very night.

Returning to the inn, we find Simple informing the host he wishes to speak to Falstaff. When told to knock at the knight's door, Simple refuses to do so, because he has seen an old woman enter that room. Pretending to be shocked at Falstaff's behaviour, the host jocosely calls to him to send the old woman down, only to hear Falstaff rejoin she has already gone. This fact vexes Simple, for he has followed her thither to ask what she knows about the chain Nym beguiled from his master. Under pretence of knowing all about this, Falstaff reports that the witch pronounced the chain lost forever, an answer Simple believes. He next proceeds to inquire whether his master will win Anne Page, and, on hearing the witch promised such a consummation, hastens away to carry the good news to Slender.

When he has gone, the host inquires whether the wise woman really was there, and is told by Falstaff that she was indeed, and taught him more than he ever learned before! Host and guest are still conversing, when Bardolph bursts in, wailing the German grooms were horse-thieves who have run away with their steeds. This bad news is confirmed by the

parson, who rushes in to warn the host to guard his property well, as horse-thieves are abroad. A moment later Dr. Caius comes in his turn to caution his friend that the German duke is a charlatan, belated warnings which only incense the host, who rushes out in hopes of recovering his property.

Left alone, Falstaff soliloquises that luck has forsaken him, since he forswore himself at cards. He is talking thus when Mistress Quickly brings him the message from Mistress Ford, which he at first refuses to receive. But, when the messenger assures him poor Mistress Ford has been beaten black and blue, yet is longing for him, he condescends to accept her tryst.

Meantime, in another room, Fenton is interviewing the host, promising him a hundred pounds over and above the value of his lost steeds, if he will only help him and keep his counsel. The prospect of such gain decides the host to listen, and he soon learns how dearly Fenton loves Anne Page, and how little chance there is of obtaining her fairly, since her father is plotting to give her to Slender, and her mother to the French physician. Fenton adds that Anne Page has revealed to him the tryst by the oak, and the fact that she is to personate the fairy queen; also that her father has ordered her to wear white and go with Slender, and her mother to wear green and follow Caius. When the host asks which parent the maiden will deceive, Fenton replies she will trick both by hastening with him to the parsonage, where the host must have some one ready to marry them, and thus earn the promised reward.

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ACT V. The fifth act opens just as Falstaff is promising Mistress Quickly to meet Mistress Ford, and fervently hoping his third venture will prove successful. Volubly promising to procure chain and horns for his disguise, Mistress Quickly bustles off, just before Ford enters, still personating Master Brook.

The fat knight now boasts that if his friend comes to the park at midnight, he will behold wonders, and then fatuously reveals the whole plot, telling how sorely he was beaten while disguised as a witch, a punishment he has not undergone since last attending school. It is with the understanding that they are to meet in the forest, that Falstaff parts from his visitor, assuring him that Mistress Ford will be handed over to him there.

We now behold Windsor park; where Page, Shallow, and Slender are preparing to hide until the fairy lights appear. Not only has Slender been duly coached for the part he is to play, but he reveals how he has agreed upon passwords with Mistress Anne. He, therefore, feels confident of success, and goes with his companions to lie in wait for Falstaff, whom they expect to recognise by his broad antlers.

On a street leading to the park, the Merry Wives of Windsor encounter the doctor, whom Mistress Page instructs to seize the fairy in green, and hurry her off to the deanery, where she has arranged for the marriage. Then she bids him hasten on and hide, since he must not be seen in their company. When he has gone, Mistress Page remarks her hus-

band will resent the trick she is playing, but deems it is better to be beaten than to be disappointed in her plans. Both women now hasten off to the park, and, shortly after they have vanished, the school-master appears with the fairy train, bidding them in the broadest of Welsh accents to trip along, be mindful of their parts, and duck low down in the sawpit, so as not to be seen before the right time.

In another part of the park we behold Falstaff, disguised as the phantom hunter, just as he is concluding that since the clock has struck twelve, he may soon hope to behold his beloved. In his usual bombastic vein he reminds us how Jove underwent sundry transformations during his courtships, and does not hesitate to compare himself to the king of the gods. When Mistress Ford joins him, he sentimentally addresses her as his doe, but is checked in his first attempt at familiarity by the warning that Mistress Page is present, too. Nothing daunted, however, the gallant Falstaff proposes to make love to both. While they admire his fine disguise, a sudden noise so terrifies the women that they rush away, and Falstaff ruefully concludes it is written his trysts shall be interrupted!

Going in the direction of the noise, he beholds the parson and Pistol, disguised as hobgoblins, closely followed by Mistress Quickly, Anne Page, and the other fairies. As it is death for a mortal to spy upon fairy doings or address them, Falstaff flings himself face downward on the grass, and in this position overhears Mistress Quickly instruct the fairies to perform their duties, while the hobgoblins pre-

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pare to visit the places where maids have been slack. Then, suddenly, the spirits scent the nearness of some man, and, discovering Falstaff, gather around him, and pinch and burn him, singing a mocking song. While they are thus skipping madly, Dr. Caius slips away in one direction with a boy dressed in green, while Slender carries off a boy in white. Meanwhile, Fenton experiences no difficulty in enticing the real Anne Page away from the 'revels, which continue until the blast of a hunting horn summons the fairies away.

Free from the imps' tormenting presence, Falstaff rises, and is removing the buck's head forming part of his disguise, when Mr. and Mistress Page and Mr. and Mistress Ford appear, mockingly asking what he thinks of Windsor wives? Their taunts reveal how he has been tricked, although he had mistrusted the pinches and burns inflicted by those elves. When the parson thereupon admonishes him never to indulge in such pastimes as courting married ladies again, the fat knight ruefully promises reform, regretting he should be the hero of so ridiculous a tale!

Accused also of swindling Brook out of money, Falstaff becomes so dejected, that Page cheers him with the assurance he can soon laugh at those who made fun of him, since it gave Slender the opportunity to marry Anne Page. The mother refuses to believe this, for she feels certain her daughter is now pledged to the doctor; even while the parents are disputing on this subject, Slender bursts in, bellowing for 'father Page,' and swearing he has been

tricked, for, on arriving at his destination, he found his fairy a 'great lubberly boy!' Hotly reproached by Page, he explains how carefully he carried out the programme; whereupon Mistress Page avers he was not to blame for the mistake, as she arranged her daughter should leave with the doctor. She is still talking when Caius comes in, roaring indignantly that he has married a boy! He, too, insists he did not blunder, and Ford and Page are just wondering what can have become of the missing Anne, when Fenton and his bride appear, begging pardon and announcing their wedding. 'In reply to the parents' indignant questions, Fenton explains how, unable to obey them both, Anne saved herself from present disappointment and future sin by marrying the man she loved. As their marriage is an accomplished fact,—which Ford decides cannot be remedied,—Page decides to wish his new son-in-law happiness.

Meantime, Falstaff rejoices that, although the plot was aimed at him, its worst consequences have fallen on the plotters' heads. All therefore decide to forgive the past, and return home amicably, to laugh over their adventures by the fireside; but as they depart, Ford slyly assures Sir John that one of his promises has not been broken, since Brook is hereafter to enjoy the company of Mistress Ford!

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

ACT I. The opening of the first act shows Leonato, Governor of Messina, standing before his house with his daughter Hero, and niece Beatrice, to receive the gentleman messenger, announcing the victorious return of Don Pedro of Arragon. After perusing his letter, Leonato inquires how many lives have been lost, and is delighted to hear few have perished. He then remarks that the most lauded person in his dispatches is Claudio, who the messenger enthusiastically declares 'better bettered expectation.'

The ladies, who have listened eagerly, now join in the conversation, Beatrice pertly inquiring whether Lord Mountanto is returning with the troops? As the messenger fails to recognise the person she mentions by this nickname, Hero explains her cousin means Signior Benedick, of Padua, who, Beatrice adds, once challenged a fool, and whose victims she has volunteered to eat, because she does not believe they exist!

Although amused by his niece's pertness, the governor thinks she is making too much ado about nothing, for he good-naturedly exclaims she is taxing too sorely a good soldier. Then, as Beatrice continues to gird at her absent foe, Leonato explains how his niece and Signior Benedick never meet

hout indulging in a 'merry war' of wit. Tossing her head, Beatrice rejoins this youth has never gotten the better of her, and claims that in their encounter she routed four of his five wits. Before the messenger adds Benedick is returning to his friend Claudio, she pities the latter, declaring he will pay dear for such intimacy.

At this juncture Don Pedro of Arragon, his brother Don John, Claudio, and Benedick appear, and are courteously welcomed by Leonato, who, in reply to their apologies for troubling him with their entertainment, assures Don Pedro trouble never came to his house in the guise of his Grace. Turning to the ladies, Don Pedro next inquires whether one is Leonato's daughter, and enters into conversation with Hero, just as a remark from Benedick sets forth Beatrice's scornful, 'I wonder that you are still be talking, Signior Benedick; nobody likes you.' This gibe is promptly returned by Leonato, 'That, my dear lady Disdain! are you yet living?' Leonato Beatrice avers Disdain will never die, so long as it has such food to feed upon as Signior Benedick. These two continue thus to bandy bit-sweet remarks, until Benedick, piqued by his companion's jeers, exclaims he wishes his horse had the speed of her tongue, and were so 'good a conqueror.' Don Pedro, who has paid no attention to his skirmish, now announces he has accepted Leonato's invitation to tarry in Messina a month, a proposition pleasing to his host, who welcomes even the vexatious Don John, recently reconciled to the brother against whom he rebelled.

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While the princes of Arragon are escorted off the scene by Leonato and the ladies, the two young men linger on the stage. Seizing this favourable opportunity, Claudio asks Benedick whether he has noted Leonato's fair daughter, whom he admired before the war began, and with whom he now feels deeply enamoured, although fickle by nature. Benedick, the confirmed bachelor, ridicules his friend for yielding to feminine charms, and does his sarcastic best to find fault with Hero, pronouncing her attractions greatly inferior to those of Beatrice. Then, seeing his strictures remain without effect, he wonders whether he will 'never see a bachelor of three-score again,' just as Don Pedro returns on the scene.

When he pleasantly inquires what can detain them, Benedick playfully volunteers to reveal Claudio's secret, provided the prince command him to do so, and, enjoined to speak, reveals how dearly Claudio loves Hero. Unable to deny this, Claudio is overjoyed when Don Pedro pronounces the lady worthy of him, although Benedick continues to rail at him for contemplating matrimony. Good-naturedly remarking that even Benedick may yet change his mind, Don Pedro is told that, should such be the case, they may take him for a laughing stock, and adorn him with the sign, 'here you may see Benedick the married man!'

A little more conversation ensues, ere Don Pedro sends Benedick to inform Leonato they will honour the supper to which he has invited them. Then turning to Claudio, his favourite, Don Pedro promises to aid him secure Hero's hand. In fact, his

Grace proposes to sound the young lady in disguise that evening, and in case he finds her favourably inclined toward Claudio, to arrange with her father for an immediate marriage.

The curtain next rises on a room in the governor's house, where Leonato is asking his brother Antonio whether music has been ordered for the evening's entertainment? After answering in the affirmative, Antonio reports that one of his servants overheard Don Pedro and Claudio discussing Hero, with whom the prince has evidently fallen in love. Delighted with this news, Leonato proposes to warn his daughter, so she may be ready to answer, should the prince sue for her hand.

Scarcely have he and his brother passed off the stage when Don John draws near with one of his followers, who inquires why he seems sad? Replying in a misanthropic vein, Don John admits that he longs to show himself 'a plain-dealing villain,' and how he has determined to seize every opportunity to make trouble for Claudio, whom he hates. These two men are joined by another follower of Don John, who announces he has been royally entertained at supper, where he has heard that Hero is about to marry Claudio. Such a piece of good fortune as an heiress-wife for the man he detests, irritates Don John, who inquires how his friend discovered the secret, and proposes to devise a plot whereby this love-affair will be crossed. His two friends, equally ready for villainy, gladly promise to aid him as much as they can.

ACT II. The second act opens in Leonato's

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house, while he is questioning his brother and the ladies of his household in regard to Don John's absence from the supper? Beatrice, who declares Don John always looks so sour that she suffers from heartburn whenever he is near her, seems glad he was away. She suggests that were he and Benedick blended together, they might make one fair-looking man, an opinion she expresses with so sharp a tongue, that her uncle vows she will never secure a husband until she learns to control it. This reproof calls forth further witticisms on Beatrice's part, for she avers she does not want any husband, but would far rather remain an old maid. When her uncle ventures to remind her that old maids 'have to lead apes into hell,' she pertly rejoins the devil will take the apes from her at the door, and send her back to heaven, to sit among the bachelors, and live 'as merry as the day is long.'

Turning to his niece Hero, Antonio inquires whether she, too, proposes to follow her cousin's example? Whereupon Beatrice mocks Hero for tamely accepting any husband her father cares to choose. When Leonato exclaims he doesn't despair of seeing his niece married some day, too, Beatrice continues to gibe at the men, vowing her cousin's wedding will be a time of great annoyance for her, until the noise of approaching revellers forces the party to mask and receive the arriving guests.

Among those who crowd in, wearing masks and dominoes, we discern Don Pedro, who, singling out Hero, engages her in conversation, and gradually draws her away from the rest, so as to be able to

discuss serious matters. Meantime, one of his companions draws aside Margaret and Ursula, Hero's companions, and he and Antonio entertain them, while Beatrice, who has been joined by Benedick, immediately begins with him a wordy battle, wherein each shatters the other's lance as soon as possible. Still, they leave the room together, to join the dance, just as Don John appears with one of his followers and Claudio.

Pretending to mistake the masked Claudio for Benedick, Don John, who is bent upon mischief, comments to him upon the fact of his brother's marked attentions to Hero; then, perceiving he has roused a lover's jealousy, he falsely states his brother intends to marry the governor's fair daughter. A moment later, Don John and his follower having gone, Claudio angrily mutters this is terrible news, for he now believes the prince is, indeed, wooing on his own account. He, therefore, bitterly concludes 'friendship is constant in all other things save in the office and affairs of love,' and that every man should do his own wooing, especially as Benedick joins him, and teasingly advises him to wear the willow, since the prince has secured his lady-love. Then, seeing Claudio depart greatly depressed, Benedick comments upon his disappointment, and wonders why Lady Beatrice called him 'the prince's fool,' an epithet which sorely rankles.

Such is the wound his vanity has received, that he determines to be revenged, and is just about to seek Beatrice's society once more, when Don Pedro appears asking where Claudio may be? When Bene-

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dick describes his friend's melancholy, Don Pedro wonders what could have caused it, and when told it is because he has stolen his friend's nest, rejoins merrily he did so merely to teach the birds to sing for their rightful owner! Then, detecting a note of pique in his companion's tone, Don Pedro slyly inquires whether Benedick has again been quarrelling with Beatrice? This opens the floodgates, Benedick vowing he would not marry so sharp-tongued a lady, were she 'endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgressed.' He is still holding forth on this subject when Beatrice enters with a few of her guests, so seeing her draw near, Benedick implores Don Pedro to dismiss him, and vanishes after exclaiming, 'I cannot endure my Lady Tongue!'

Addressing Beatrice, the prince teasingly informs her she has lost the heart of Signior Benedick, to which the young lady retorts it had only been lent to her for a while; finding an equally ready repartee to every remark he ventures. Turning to Claudio, Don Pedro then rallies him on his sadness, and, although the young man answers him shortly, kindly informs him he has so successfully wooed Hero in his behalf, that her father has given consent to the marriage, and all now remaining to do is to settle the wedding day. These tidings are gravely confirmed by Leonato, who invites Claudio to take his daughter's hand,—a move the young lover accomplishes in silence. Noting this, Beatrice ventures to taunt him, whereupon he rejoins that 'silence is the perfectest herald of joy. I were but a little



H. Merle

BEATRICE AND BENEDICT

Bene. "Do not you love me?"

Beat. "Why, no; no more than reason."

Bene. "Why, then your uncle, and the Prince, and Claudio
have been deceived; for they swore you did."

Much Ado About Nothing. Act 5, Scene 4.

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happy, if I could say how much.' Then, turning to his betrothed, Claudio tells her he loves her dearly, only to be urged by Beatrice to kiss her instead.

Fascinated by Beatrice's merry ways, Don Pedro now playfully proposes to marry her, but she, catching his spirit, promptly returns his Grace would be too costly a husband for every-day wear, and that she would not think of accepting him unless she could have another for working days. It is only when her uncle begs her to attend to some household matters that Beatrice departs, while Don Pedro remarks that she is a 'pleasant-spirited lady.'

This praise pleases Leonato, who vows his niece is never sad or cross, although she gibes so constantly at marriage. When Don Pedro suggests she would make an ideal wife for Benedick, Leonato exclaims they would talk themselves mad in the course of a week. Paying no heed to this comment, Don Pedro inquires of Claudio when his marriage is to take place, and, learning it will be only on the following Monday,—a date too distant to suit the lover, although the father considers that space of time far too brief to accomplish all that must be done,—proposes to beguile the time of waiting by bringing together Beatrice and Benedick, who, he feels certain, can easily be induced to fall in love. Enlisting Leonato's and Claudio's ready aid to carry out this scheme, Don Pedro bids them follow him, so he can instruct them what moves to make to compel these wayward young folks to love each other, gleefully boasting that a double marriage

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will result, and that Cupid is not the only match-maker.

This group has barely left the room when Don John and his friend return to resume their discussion of Claudio's marriage. Perceiving Don John's desire to cross this plan in some way, his interlocutor suggests it can be done, although not honestly. When Don John inquires what he means, he explains how, having won Margaret's favour, he can easily make her appear at her mistress's window at night. He suggests that, if he call her Hero, it will seem as if Claudio's bride were secretly entertaining a lover. This vile plot meets with such enthusiastic approval from Don John, that he and the courtier decide to draw Don Pedro and Claudio aside, and tell them Hero is faithless, offering to prove the truth of their words if they will lie in ambush beneath her window. There, Don John's friend will personate the lover, thus earning the reward of a thousand ducats.

The next scene occurs in Leonato's orchard, where Benedick summons a boy and sends him for a book, as he wishes to enjoy a little solitude. Left alone, Benedick marvels that Claudio should have fallen so deeply in love, as hitherto this youth has been devoted to his profession as a soldier. It is evident love can effect strange transformations, for Benedick mockingly concludes it may some day transform him into an oyster. Still, he deems that day far distant, for he avers that, while one woman may be fair, another wise, another virtuous, 'till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come

in my grace!' He further declares that his ideal much be rich, wise, virtuous, fair, mild, noble, capable of good discourse, an excellent musician, 'her hair being of what colour it please God.' This whole soliloquy betrays great self-appreciation, and when it is concluded, Benedick complacently withdraws to a leafy arbour, so as not to be disturbed in his meditations by the people drawing near.

From this arbour Benedick notices Don Pedro, Claudio, and Leonato strolling in the garden, apparently listening to music, but in reality bent on carrying out the deception they have planned. After asking Claudio, in a whisper, whether their victim is at hand, Don Pedro calls for a pretty song with a senseless refrain, and compliments the singer upon his way of rendering it. Meantime, from his hiding-place, Benedick sarcastically criticises this music, averring that had a dog howled thus, he would have been hanged. After dismissing the musician,—who is hired to serenade Hero that night,—Don Pedro strolls nearer to the arbour, inquiring of Leonato whether he meant what he said when he stated his niece Beatrice loved Benedick madly? In spite of the fact that Claudio exclaims this cannot be true, Leonato asserts his niece dotes upon that cavalier, although she pretends to abhor him.

The vanity of the hidden Benedick is so tickled at the thought of having achieved the conquest of so difficult a lady, that he greedily listens, only to hear the gentlemen repeat that Beatrice counterfeits dislike. So serious are they while making these statements that Benedick feels convinced they

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are telling the truth, even when Leonato declares his niece constantly writes love letters she never sends. After discussing at length these letters, Beatrice's tears, and her amorous exclamations,—all of which information Leonato claims to have obtained from Hero,—Don Pedro gravely suggests Benedick should be informed of this passion; but Claudio declares such a move would be passing cruel, as his friend does not believe in love, and would surely make fun of the lady. All three, therefore, decide to allow Beatrice to pine, hoping she may in time forget her mad passion for Benedick, whom they pronounce utterly unworthy of being beloved by so charming a lady. Having thus executed their plan, the three conspirators move away, Claudio whispering to his companions that if Benedick doesn't dote upon Beatrice hereafter, he will never trust his expectation.

The gentlemen having gone, Benedick issues from his hiding-place, marvelling at all he has heard, and deciding it will never do to allow so lovely a lady to pine away. Instead, he proposes to sacrifice his desire to remain single, and has just decided to marry soon, when Beatrice comes into the garden, tartly stating she has been sent,—much against her will,—to summon him to dinner. Instead of answering this remark in kind, Benedick, convinced that Beatrice is doing violence to her feelings, proves so deferential that she fails to recognise him. Because she flounces off, he conceitedly comments that her manner is confirmation strong of all he has overheard, and declares that, if he does not take pity

upon her, he is a villain, and that if he does not love her he is a Jew!

ACT III. The third act opens in the governor's garden, where Hero bids Margaret run into the parlour and whisper to Beatrice,—who is conversing there with the prince and Claudio,—that her cousin and Ursula are in the orchard talking about her, and that, if she cares to overhear them, she can do so by hiding in a neighbouring bower. Promising to induce Beatrice to come soon, the maid vanishes, while Hero instructs her companions to talk loudly about Benedick, praising him highly, and depicting him as desperately in love with Beatrice; for it is by such means Hero hopes to induce her cousin to fall in love with this swain. A moment later, having seen Beatrice steal to her hiding-place, Hero strolls in that direction, talking carelessly of her cousin's light ways, and of Signior Benedick's love for her. She declares this suitor deserves everything that is good, but, knowing Beatrice's scorn for him, she avers she has advised him never to make his love known. In support of her opinion, she describes how Beatrice ridicules every man who approaches her, and vows the only way to cure Benedick of his hopeless passion will be to 'devise some honest slanders' to stain her cousin with. Such a proceeding seems objectionable to Ursula, who inquires why Beatrice does not look favourably upon Benedick, whom she considers a fine young man? Thereupon Hero assures her the young man is, indeed, excellent, and that she regrets he has so sorely misplaced his affection. Then, feeling her work done, Hero suggests they return to

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the house to decide upon the wedding attire for the morrow.

After they have gone, Beatrice emerges from her hiding-place, amazed at what she has heard, and radically cured of her most serious fault, by the life-like picture her cousin has held up before her eyes. She now decides to cease gibing, to bid maiden pride and contempt farewell, and to reward Benedick for his great love.

The next scene is played in a room in Leonato's house, where Don Pedro, talking to the governor and to others, states he is lingering in Messina to witness the marriage, after which he intends to return home. When Claudio volunteers to accompany him, he playfully rejoins that as it would be cruel to separate him from his bride, he has decided to take Benedick in his stead, knowing he is good company, and leaves no lady-love behind him. Hearing this, Benedick shamefacedly rejoins he is no longer what he has been, and when they twit him with having a toothache, mutters it is easy for every man to 'master a grief but he that has it.'

Having observed his friend closely, Claudio now exclaims Benedick must be in love, for he has marked sundry tell-tale signs, such as hat-brushing, frequent barbering, fine dressing, and going to such unheard of sixteenth-century lengths as washing his face! After enduring their gibes for a while, Benedick begs Leonato for a secret hearing, so, while they two draw aside, Don Pedro and Claudio gleefully whisper that Hero and Margaret must have carried out their part of the plot, and that these

'two bears will not bite one another when they meet.'

At this moment Don John joins them, and, after greeting his brother, states he has a matter to impart which concerns Claudio closely. Invited to speak, he asks Claudio whether he is really to be married on the morrow, looking so compassionately at him, that the youth anxiously inquires whether he has heard of any impediment to his nuptials? With pretended reluctance, Don John now declares Hero is disloyal, offering to prove the truth of his statement, provided Claudio station himself beneath her window that night. He adds that should Hero's lover choose to marry her after that, he may do so, but that he feels confident he will never wish to trust her again. His jealousy roused by these remarks, Claudio swears, should he behold any reason why he should not wed Hero, he will shame her in the face of the congregation on the morrow, a decision upheld by Don Pedro, who feels his honour, too, is at stake, and they are still discussing what steps to take when the curtain falls.

When it rises again, it is night in the street before Leonato's house, where Dogberry and his henchman Verges are placing the watch. Giving them long-winded instructions, Dogberry misuses his words in a comical fashion, and cautions his men not to meddle with thieves or any wrongdoers, lest they run into danger. The watchmen wisely conclude to sleep rather than watch, closing their eyes tight when thieves pass by, lest they should be tempted to interfere with their occupations. The whole

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scene is ludicrous in the extreme, and when Dogberry goes away, he bids the men keep particular watch of the governor's door, as a wedding is pending and disturbances can be expected.

No sooner have Dogberry and Verges gone, than two of Don John's men steal forward, closely noted by the watchmen, who have taken up their post on the church bench, to rest until it is time to go to bed. From this place of vantage they overhear one man boasting he has earned a thousand ducats in compassing an act of villainy, and mention how, posted beneath Hero's window, he called the chambermaid by her name, until he deluded the hidden Claudio into believing his lady-love faithless. Although only half understanding what they see and hear, the watchmen excitedly comment to each other about the plot they have discovered, and decide to arrest the malefactors, who protest vehemently.

The scene is next transferred to Hero's apartments, on her wedding morning, just as she is calling for Beatrice and discussing fashions. In the midst of the voluble talk in regard to styles and the approaching ceremony, Beatrice seems so out of tune, that she is twitted for it by one of the attendants. This occasions a witty and wordy skirmish, which is interrupted by Margaret's announcement that all the gentlemen in town have come to escort the bride to church.

Meantime, in another room in the same house, Leonato is interviewing Dogberry and Verges, bidding them state their errand briefly, as he is very busy. As it is an impossibility for Dogberry to be

brief, he informs the governor with endless circumlocution that two knaves were caught last night, beneath his windows, who should be examined immediately. Unwilling to be detained by trifling matters, Leonato deposes Dogberry to examine these prisoners himself, whereupon, proud of this charge, the constable hurries his prisoners off, bidding Verges summon a secretary with pen and inkhorn to take down all they say. Just as Dogberry vanishes with men and prisoners, the governor is summoned to join his guests for the wedding.

ACT IV. The fourth act opens in the church, as Leonato is enjoining upon the friar to celebrate the marriage as briefly as possible. In compliance with these orders, the friar begins his momentous questions, and is startled to hear Claudio deny he has come here to marry Hero. Deeming this a mere quibble in regard to terms, he nevertheless propounds the same question to the lady, who returns the conventional answer. When the friar next asks whether any one knows any 'inward impediment why they should not be joined in marriage,' Claudio meaningly asks his bride whether she does not? Hearing her truthfully rejoin there is no obstacle as far as she knows, Claudio demands of Leonato whether he is giving away a maiden daughter? This question also being answered in the affirmative, Claudio turns toward the wedding guests, indignantly denouncing Hero as a whited sepulchre and vowing he has good reasons for knowing she is not pure. When the father tremblingly demands whether this means he anticipated his wedding,

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Claudio rejoins he has always treated Hero in brotherly fashion with 'bashful sincerity and comely love.' His villainous accusations are so incomprehensible to the innocent Hero, that fancying he has been taken suddenly ill, she speaks gently to him. Hearing this, Don Pedro interferes, angrily vowing he feels insulted because such a person was offered to his friend. Then, in the course of the lively dialogue which ensues, Don Pedro, Claudio, and Don John reveal how, standing beneath Hero's window last night, they saw a lover climb into her room. Their accusations prove so circumstantial, that Leonato tragically inquires whether there is no dagger-point for his heart, while poor Hero swoons, and is caught as she falls by her cousin Beatrice.

Seeing Hero apparently lifeless, Don John nervously suggests they go away, and succeeds in hurrying his brother and Claudio out of the church. Meantime, Benedick and Beatrice, bending over the fainting Hero, call for help, which Leonato refuses to give, averring 'death is the fairest cover for her shame that may be wish'd for,' and saying he hopes Hero will never open her eyes again! His opinion is not shared by Benedick and Beatrice, for when he wails nothing can ever 'wash her clean again,' his niece exclaims her cousin is belied. In hopes of clearing Hero's reputation, Benedick now asks Beatrice whether she slept with her cousin last night as usual, and is appalled to hear how, for the first time, she omitted doing so. Although the heart-broken father considers this an additional proof of his daughter's guilt, the friar insists no culprit ever bore

so innocent a face, claiming that long experience would enable him to detect the slightest trace of wrong-doing. He is, therefore, ready to swear the sweet lady lies 'guiltless here under some blighting error,' although the father does not believe him. While they are talking, Hero's eyes open, so the friar eagerly inquires who has misled her? Truthfully, yet sadly, Hero rejoins she does not know what they mean, never having even conversed with a man at an improper time or in an improper way. This statement convinces the friar and Benedick that some treachery is afoot, which the latter unhesitatingly ascribes to Don John, 'whose spirits toil in frame of villainies.' Hearing this, Leonato vows that, should his daughter prove guilty, he will tear her to pieces with his own hands, but if she is wronged, 'the proudest of them shall well hear of it.'

To check his rising wrath, the friar suggests that, since the wedding guests departed under the impression that Hero had died at the altar, it will be well to keep her recovery secret, and adds that when the rumour of her death spreads abroad, and the pretence of an interment is made, people will feel so sorry for her that their pity will 'change slander to remorse.' He fancies Claudio, in particular, will feel reproached, and adds that, should his accusation prove true, Hero's shame can be hidden in a religious house, the place which would best befit 'her wounded reputation.'

This advice seems so wise that Benedick urges Leonato to follow it, so he arranges to carry out the friar's plan. All the rest now leaving the scene of

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this tragedy, Benedick tenderly addresses Beatrice, inquiring whether she has wept all the time, and showing such sympathy that she feels deeply touched. When he offers to be her friend, confessing he loves her, Beatrice rejoins that, although she does not love him, she thinks well of him. As usual, she relapses into efforts at wit, but instead of answering sharp speeches in kind, Benedick tries by every means in his power to disarm her. Hearing him vehemently offer to do anything she bids him, Beatrice calls out in righteous indignation she wishes he would kill Claudio, or at least prove him mistaken in accusing Hero. She vehemently adds that were she only a man, she would avenge this insult, whereupon Benedick gallantly pledges himself to challenge his friend for slaying Hero, since it is agreed she is to be considered dead.

The curtain next rises on the prison, where Dogberry and his henchman are fussily cross-examining their prisoners. This whole scene is comical in the extreme, for Dogberry, full of his importance, bids the secretary write down one irrelevant statement after another. The only official showing any sense is the sexton, who has had experience in such matters. Still, amidst the confusion it gradually transpires that the courtiers were paid by Don John to play a vile part that Hero might be publicly disgraced. This testimony is written down, although Dogberry regrets the secretary has departed before one of his prisoners termed him an ass, as he deems it important this statement be put down on the minutes, too! The prisoners, having

fully confessed their wrong-doing, are led away bound, so Leonato can deal with them as he sees fit.

ACT V. The fifth act opens in front of Leonato's house, just as Antonio assures his brother he will kill himself if he continues mourning in this extravagant way. There is, however, no consolation for Leonato's deep sufferings, so he states such counsel is as profitless as pouring water in a sieve! When he eloquently expresses his sorrow, and his brother accuses him of acting like a child, Leonato bitterly retorts, 'there was never yet philosopher that could endure the toothache patiently,' and vows his brother would show more heat if the wrong concerned him. His main object in life henceforth is to prove Hero has been belied by Claudio and the prince.

It is at this moment that Don Pedro and Claudio try to pass by and are detained by Leonato, who reviles them for wronging him and his child. When he hotly terms them villains, and threatens to prove it at the point of his sword, Don Pedro and Claudio vainly try to soothe him. Such is the excitement of both Leonato and Antonio, that they challenge Claudio to fight, while Don Pedro temperately states they are sorry to hear the lady has died, although she was charged with nothing 'but what was true and very full of proof.' This reiterated insult sends Leonato and his brother off the stage in a rage.

A moment later Benedick enters, and when Claudio inquires what news there is, answers in so cold and sarcastic a tone, that his companions fancy this is some new joke. Benedick, however, soon

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manages to draw Claudio aside, and challenges him in a whisper; in the same tone Claudio accepts this duel, although the prince, thinking they have made an appointment for an entertainment, chaffs them about it in a witty way. Then, still in pursuit of his former plan, Don Pedro reports how he heard Beatrice praise Benedick's wit, and urges Claudio to repeat the nice things she is supposed to have said about it.

In spite of all this jocularly, Benedick returns haughty answers, and finally states he does not care to consort with them any longer, since he has heard that Don John has fled, not daring to remain in the city, now it is rumoured Hero's death is due to his machinations. Seeing Benedick go off in anger after this statement, Don Pedro expresses amazement, until he and Claudio realise the young man has manfully espoused Beatrice's cause.

They are still discussing the question when Dogberry enters with his prisoners, in whom Don Pedro recognises with surprise two of his brother's men. When he questions the watch, Dogberry asserts they have been guilty of sundry misdeeds, becoming so verbose that Don Pedro finally turns to the prisoners themselves for information. They humbly confess their villainy, having been stricken with remorse on hearing the tragic result of their night's work. Their report positively staggers Don Pedro and Claudio, who can scarcely credit their ears, and only with difficulty realise how Don John started the slander which has such results.

In his remorse, Claudio is loudly mourning for

Hero, when Leonato bursts into the room, i.e. too, having, meantime, heard the news. Clamouring for the villain so he may take his revenge, Leonato is told the prisoner is not to blame for his child's death. He soon realises it is to be ascribed mainly to Don John, although the prince, and Claudio, have had their share in the evil work. Hearing his strictures, Claudio implores Leonato to impose upon him any penance he chooses, vowing his sin consisted solely in misapprehension. As the same excuse is pleaded by Don Pedro, Leonato declares he will hold himself satisfied, provided they both repair to Hero's tomb, and do penance there for the insult offered her. Not only do Claudio and the prince engage to fulfil this duty, but the lover further pledges himself to meet the irate Leonato on the morrow to learn what other atonement he can make. Then Leonato decides that, since Claudio can no longer be his son-in-law, he shall marry his niece, who is 'almost the copy of my child that's dead,' a reparation the penitent Claudio is ready to make.

Meanwhile, Leonato intends to confront Margaret and the prisoners, so as to sift the whole story down to the bottom, although the courtier voluntarily testifies she has always been virtuous, and was not aware of their vile plot. After receiving Leonato's thanks for ferreting out this affair, Dogberry retires with his men, uttering a most involved speech. Then, taking leave of Don Pedro and Claudio, who are to spend the night at Hero's tomb, Leonato and his brother go off with their prisoners to cross-question Margaret.

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The next scene is played in the governor's garden, where Benedick is imploring Margaret to secure for him an interview with Beatrice. To tease this ardent suitor, Margaret bids him write a sonnet in praise of her beauty, and when he gallantly says she deserves it, enters into witty conversation with him, ere going away to summon her mistress. While waiting for Beatrice, Benedick sings to himself, musing upon the great lovers of history, and conning the rhymes he wishes to use in composing a poem in honour of his lady-love. Although Beatrice on joining him answers his remarks in her wonted strain, Benedick makes a greater effort than ever before to win a hearing. His evident solicitude for her cousin touches Beatrice's heart, and she has barely reported Hero very ill, when Ursula bursts in, full of excitement, exclaiming Leonato has just discovered how Hero had been falsely accused, and the prince and Claudio tricked! These tidings prove so joyful to Beatrice that she graciously invites Benedick to go with her and hear all about it, an invitation he gladly accepts.

The curtain next rises on the church where Hero was disgraced, whither Don Pedro and Claudio have come with attendants and tapers to place upon her monument, a statement fully retracting the slanders they uttered on this spot. After singing a touching requiem, Claudio promises to do yearly penance in this style in memory of the lovely lady 'done to death' by his cruelty.

It is only when Don Pedro warns him dawn is near at hand that Claudio departs, saying mourn-

fully he and his friends must change garments, and hurry to Leonato's, where he is to atone for his wrongdoing by marrying the governor's niece.

At the hour for the wedding, many people assemble in Leonato's house, where the friar triumphantly states he pronounced Hero innocent from the very first. All rejoice that the mystery has been solved, and Benedick is relieved not to have to fight his friend. Turning to his daughter, who stands among the guests in wedding array, Leonato bids her and her cousin withdraw, appearing masked only at his summons. Then, he warns the remaining guests that the prince and Claudio will soon appear, and bids them play their parts properly, his brother personating the bride's father and giving her away to Claudio, although the masked lady will be Hero, and not Beatrice, as the bridegroom supposes. Even the friar consents to aid in this mystification, and Benedick suddenly proposes to give the ceremony double importance, by being united to Beatrice, with whom he has finally reached an understanding.

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It is at this juncture that Don Pedro and Claudio enter, and, after greeting the assembled guests, gravely state they are ready to proceed with the marriage. While the governor's brother goes out to get the bride, the prince, Claudio, and Benedick indulge in sprightly conversation, which continues until the ladies appear. Hesitating which to approach, Claudio begs a glimpse of the bride's face, but Leonato tells him that is not allowed, and points out the lady he is to wed. After plighting troth by

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taking hands in the friar's presence, Hero removes her mask, saying, 'when I lived, I was your other wife, and when you loved, you were my other husband.' This sudden appearance of a lady he deems dead, causes Claudio to start back in terror, but when the bride assures him one Hero was done to death, but that another is alive to marry him, he is so relieved to think she is still on earth that he welcomes her with rapture. All Hero's statements are, besides, fully confirmed by the friar, who promises to explain everything after the wedding ceremony.

Meantime, Benedick has approached Beatrice, who, removing her mask, asks what he wishes? When he inquires whether she loves him, she jauntily rejoins 'no more than reason,' although he claims her uncle, the prince, and Claudio swear such is the case. Turning the tables upon him, Beatrice then asks whether he loves her, and when he replies by repeating her words, and by revealing that Margaret, Ursula, and Hero aver she is sick of love for him, she seems surprised. Their witty difference finally attracts the attention of the rest, but when Leonato tries to make them publicly admit they like each other, they obstinately refuse to do so! Then Claudio slyly produces a paper on which Benedick was composing a sonnet to his lady, while Hero exhibits another on which Beatrice's sentiments for Benedick are betrayed. In face of this proof, the rebellious lovers no longer deny their passion, and Benedick stops all further protest on Beatrice's part by kissing her.

When rallied by Don Pedro for breaking his oath, and becoming the very thing he vowed he would never be, 'Benedick the married man,' the youth glories in his new bonds, jocosely bidding the prince get a wife, too, and inviting all present follow him and his bride to the dancing hall.

The wedding party has just vanished out of sight when a messenger announces that the traitor Don John has been caught, and is being brought back to Messina, where Benedick promises to help Don Pedro devise 'brave punishments for him.'

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

ACT I. The first act opens in the palace of the Count of Rousillon, just as his widow is bidding farewell to her son, Bertram, who has been summoned to court. The mother is loath to part with him, but Lafeu, the messenger, graciously assures her the king will father the youth, and further his fortunes. Close beside the countess stands Helena, whose tears the messenger notices, just after his hostess has mentioned how she regrets the death of the physician, who sojourned with them,—the father of the young lady beside her,—for she feels sure he could have cured the king's illness, which the courtier reports serious. When Lafeu inquires the name of this doctor, the countess introduces Helena, and fancies her tears are for her dead parent. Although warmly praising the maiden, who 'derives her honesty and achieves her goodness,' the countess warns her people may deem her grief affectation, until Helena exclaims hers is no feigned sorrow. She does not even notice Lafeu's remark that 'moderate lamentation is the right of the dead, excessive grief the enemy to the living,' but turns aside to escape further attention.

Meanwhile, the countess bestows good advice upon her son, bidding him bear himself suitably at court; then addressing Lafeu, she begs him watch

over the youth, whom she blesses ere leaving the room. The young lord now takes leave of Helena, urging her to 'be comfortable to my mother, your mistress, and make much of her,' while the courtier bids her uphold her father's credit.

After they have gone, Helena reveals in a soliloquy that her tears are for Bertram, whose image is graven in her heart, although she knows he is far above her in station. Her reminiscences of past joy in watching him are interrupted by the entrance of Parolles, Bertram's follower, whom she knows to be a 'notorious liar,' a fool and coward, but with whom she indulges in frequent bouts of repartee. When he addresses her as 'queen,' therefore, she retorts by hailing him as 'monarch,' and for a while they bandy remarks in Elizabethan taste. This word-skirmish ceases only when a page summons Parolles to attend his master, and Helena, relapsing into soliloquy, concludes that 'our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,' for she has suddenly thought of a plan whereby she can, perchance, relieve the king and avoid losing sight of the man she loves.

In the next scene we are transferred to the king's palace; just as he is telling his courtiers that Florence and Sienna being at war, a call for assistance has come from the former city. Although the king himself does not wish to appear openly in the fray, he gives his nobles permission to enter Tuscan service; for this war,—as one of the courtiers explains,—will serve as 'a nursery to our gentry, who are sick for breathing and exploit.'

Just then Bertram is ushered in,—followed by

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Lafeu and Parolles,—and is graciously welcomed by the king, who remembers his father as one of the cherished companions of his youth. Such is the praise the monarch lavishes upon the deceased count of Rousillon, that Bertram rejoins his father 'lies richer in your thoughts than on his tomb,' for even an epitaph could not laud the departed more extravagantly. Consumed with sadness and suffering, the king soon adds he wishes he were beside his former companion, one of whose favourite sayings was, 'let me not live after my flame lacks oil.' Although the courtiers try to encourage their monarch, he insists he has not long to live, and inquires when the famous physician died in the castle of Rousillon? When Bertram states this happened six months ago, the king sighs that were this man still living, he would gladly try his skill, for nature and sickness have long been disputing the possession of his poor body. Then, after a last gracious word to the newcomer, the monarch departs with his train.

We return to the castle of Rousillon, where the countess, summoning her steward and clown, inquires what they have to report in regard to her gentlewoman? Such are the rambling answers she receives, and the clown's anxiety to obtain her consent to his marrying, that she has to dismiss him ere she can question the steward in peace. She then learns that Helena has been brooding lately, and that, while talking to herself, was overheard to confess she loved Bertram, and that fortune was cruel to place such difference between their estates. He feels confident the young lady has, besides, some

plan in view, and hence deems it his duty to warn his mistress. After thanking the steward for this information, the countess dismisses him, with orders not to mention the matter, and, while waiting for Helena, murmurs she felt just the same when she was young, for 'this thorn doth to our rose of youth rightly belong.'

As soon as Helena comes in, the countess addresses her in tender tones, saying she considers herself her mother. Because the maiden starts at the word 'mother,' the countess repeats it, seeming surprised when Helena rejects such relationship. Urged to explain, the girl declares it is impossible a humble maiden should be sister to the high-born Bertram, whose servant and vassal she will always be, but whom she has no desire to call brother. When the countess tenderly inquires whether she is equally reluctant to accept her as mother, the girl hesitates; then replies she would not be Bertram's sister under any circumstances. With kindly emphasis, the countess then explains she might become her daughter by marrying her son, and noting Helena's change of colour and lack of response gently reproves her for obstinacy. She thus gradually induces the girl to admit a love for Bertram, which, in spite of all her attempts to root it out of her heart, has constantly grown and increased. Still, because her affection is pure and true, Helena implores the countess 'let not your hate encounter with my love for loving where you do,' and craves permission to carry out a cherished plan. This consists in a journey to Paris, to offer the king one of her father's prescrip-

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tions, which, she feels confident, will cure his disease.

When the countess shrewdly inquires whether this is her sole motive, Helena truthfully rejoins that, had not Bertram gone there first, she might never have thought of carrying medicine to his majesty. But, when the countess objects that the learned physicians at court may refuse to let a maiden try her skill, Helena declares that, if the king will only grant her leave to try, success will ensue, and that no time is to be lost. Convinced by these words, the countess not only allows her to depart, but furnishes money and attendants, so she can present herself at court in a suitable manner, proposing, meanwhile, to remain at home, and pray God to bless her undertaking.

ACT II. The second act opens in the palace in Paris, just as the king is taking formal leave of the nobles who are to take part in the Florentine wars. After expressing thanks for his good wishes, one lord voices the fervent hope they will find him better on their return. The monarch, however, sadly rejoins this cannot be, although his 'heart will not confess he owes the malady that doth his life besiege.' Then, playfully cautioning the youths against the wiles of Italian maidens, the king leaves the room. While the lords chat together, Bertram openly regrets being ordered to remain at court, for he longs to take part in the adventures his companions are seeking abroad. Perceiving his regret, his companions playfully suggest he steal away, advice he is inclined to follow when they take leave of him

and Parolles, who, meantime, has been boasting freely of the deeds he once performed in Italy. The lords have scarcely gone, when Parolles urges Bertram to remain with them until they leave, for he secretly hopes his master will yet decide to join them in Florence.

As Bertram and his attendant pass out of the room, the king comes in and sits down. He is sunk in reverie when Lafeu kneels before him, begging pardon for intruding, but craving a boon. Invited to speak, the courtier inquires whether the king would like to be cured of his infirmity, and hearing him answer 'no,' pityingly rejoins it is the old story of fox and grapes! When he adds that a doctor has come whose remedies can raise the dead, the king inquires who it may be, and is so surprised on learning it is a woman, that curiosity overcomes his reluctance. He therefore bids Lafeu admit her, threatening him with ridicule in case he spoke too highly of her. Delighted with the success of his venture, Lafeu hurries out, to return immediately with Helena, whom he fussily introduces, bidding her speak her mind to the king, and leaving the two together only after making a would-be facetious remark.

The monarch now questions Helena, who gravely states her father, on his deathbed, entrusted to her keeping a wonderful remedy for the very disease from which the king is suffering. It is this nostrum she tenders, for which kindness the king graciously thanks her, saying, however, it is useless to try it as his physicians have pronounced his malady past cure. Hearing him refuse her offer, Helena begs

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to be dismissed with a kind thought, so she can return home. Then the king, touched by her unselfish desire to serve him, expresses such gracious thanks, that Helena feels emboldened to urge it would do him no harm to try her remedy, and to remind him that wisdom has often come from the mouth of babes. Although the king persists in his refusal, Helena, detecting wavering in his tone, expresses such confidence in her drug that he finally inquires how long it would take to show its effect? Hearing the young lady state the miracle would be accomplished in forty-eight hours, the king asks what she would be willing to stake on the venture, and when she exclaims her very life, decides to try her physic. Although he warns her it may minister to her death should he succumb, Helena remains undaunted, and confidently inquires what reward he will grant her if she succeed? The king swearing by his scepter she shall choose it herself, she requests that since he can dispose of the bachelors in his realm, he will permit her to select a husband among those beneath royal rank. Not only does the king readily subscribe to this, but shakes hands upon it ere leaving the room with 'Dr. She,' who is to make the immediate test of her remedy, and thus save his life, if possible.

We are next vouchsafed another glimpse in the castle of Rousillon, just as the countess has summoned her clown, and, after wasting many words in bandying witty remarks with him, entrusts to his keeping a letter he is to carry to Helena at court.

Meantime Bertram, conversing in the palace with



Fr. Pecht

HELENA OFFERS TO CURE THE KING

Hel. "And, hearing your high Majesty is touch'd
With that malignant cause wherein the honour
Of my dear father's gift stands chief in power,
I come to tender it, and my appliance,"

All's Well | That Ends Well. Act 2, Scene 1.



Lafeu and Parolles, learns that, although people claim the age of miracles is past, strange things can still happen! The miracle now causing a sensation at court is the fact that, at the end of two days, the new remedy has caused such a difference in the king's health that he has been pronounced cured. They are still discussing the wonder, when the king enters with Helena, whom all regard curiously, and whom Parolles recognises as an old acquaintance, when the king presents her to the court as his preserver.

After summoning all his followers, the king bids Helena consider the bachelors and select among them the one she desires to marry. Greeting them courteously, Helena considers each in turn, while Lafeu openly regrets not to be eligible for her favour. Addressing the bachelors, Helena states that, being a maid, she blushes at having to make a public choice. Still, encouraged by the king, she approaches one noble and asks whether he would be willing to listen to her suit? Although he expresses cordial readiness, she passes on to another, whose answer Lafeu deems too cold, since he mutters 'these boys are boys of ice!' Finally, Helena pauses before Bertram, declaring she dares not say she takes him, but that she is willing to give herself and her service ever, whilst she lives, into his guiding power.

Seeing her choice is made, the king orders Bertram to marry her, but the youth restively vows he will select his own wife! When the monarch indignantly reminds him of what Helena has done in his behalf, Bertram acknowledges her services, but persists that

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is no reason why he should marry her. Then the king insists, but Bertram expresses such disdain for a person brought up as dependant in his mother's house, that his sovereign reproves him for haughtiness, and promises to bestow gifts upon Helena, which, backed with her virtue, will equal any rank! Because Bertram petulantly rejoins he cannot love her and will not try to do so, Helena implores the monarch not to insist, and declares herself satisfied; but this fails to please his majesty, who, feeling his honour engaged, orders Bertram to make good his word, under penalty of his 'revenge and hate.' Thus adjured, Bertram is forced to yield, although he mutters he submits his fancy to the king's eyes, when, at the monarch's command, he takes Helena's hand, and all file out of the room for the wedding.

The only persons left on the stage are Lafeu and Parolles, who discuss this forced match. During this interview Lafeu discovers what a hollow boaster Parolles is, and shows such contempt for him that, when he leaves the room for a moment, his interlocutor mutters he will get even with him yet! On returning, Lafeu reports the marriage concluded, and, when Parolles resumes his boasting, calls him a worthless, saucy fellow, and turns his back upon him in scorn.

Shortly after Lafeu has gone, Bertram joins Parolles, petulantly complaining he is undone, and 'forfeited to cares forever!' In his anger, he vows he will have nothing to do with the bride forced upon him, but will hasten off to the Tuscan wars, in spite of the king. He has, besides, no desire to

ascertain what the letters contain which have come from his mother, but is eager to depart, a decision welcome to Parolles, who is longing to go to Italy. He, therefore, strengthens his young master's resolution by every means in his power, assuring him, among other things, that 'a young man married is a man that's marr'd,' and urging him to avenge the wrong the king has done him by forsaking his bride.

After they have gone, Helena enters with the clown, who has brought her letters, and from whom she inquires about her mistress's health. These two are soon joined by Parolles, who, after a wordy encounter with the clown, delivers a message from Bertram, to the effect that Helena is to return immediately to Rousillon, as business calls her husband away, and will prevent his joining her for a few days, in spite of his fervent desire to be with her. Bertram's orders are that his new-made wife take immediate leave of the king, offering such apologies as she thinks fit, and, this done, present herself before him, as he wishes to give her his last orders.

Meantime, Lafeu has gone in quest of Bertram, to warn him that his follower, Parolles, is a mere trifler—a warning the youth scorns because he has taken this man at his own estimate. When Parolles enters, therefore, reporting Helena is already on her way to the king, Bertram states that, having written his letters, collected his treasures, and given orders for his horses, he will depart at the very hour when he should take possession of his bride! During this scene, Parolles vainly tries to conciliate

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Lafeu, who dubs him a nut without kernel, tells Bertram 'the soul of this man is in his clothes,' and repeats he is not to be trusted 'in matter of heavy consequence;' all of which warnings prove vain.

It is now that Helena humbly presents herself to receive her husband's orders, and is told that, although called away from her side, Bertram will soon rejoin her, but that, meantime, she is to hasten home, and deliver to his mother the letter he entrusts to her keeping. Rejoining that she is his obedient servant, and will try 'with true observance to eke out that wherein toward me my homely stars have fail'd to equal my great fortune,' Helena is impatiently interrupted by Bertram, who bids her begone. Although she implores him to part kindly from her with a kiss, he dismisses her abruptly, and after she has vanished, grimly vows he will never visit his home as long as she is there! Then, turning to his companion, he invites him to flee with him to Italy.

ACT III. The third act opens in a palace in Florence, where the duke has interviewed the French noblemen, and explained to them his quarrel with Sienna. All the young adventurers pronounce his cause holy, and report that, although their monarch would gladly help him, he can do so only by allowing his nobles to join in the enterprise. Promising to welcome all who come, the duke announces they will take to the field on the morrow.

In the castle of Rousillon the countess has just finished perusing a letter brought by the clown, which announces her son's marriage and the return

of the bride. She marvels that Bertram should not accompany Helena, which causes the clown to term him a melancholy man, a statement he explains by describing how absent-mindedly the youth continually sang the same tune, thereby betraying a pre-occupied mind. While the countess reads her missive a second time, the clown avers court life has spoiled him for his country sweetheart, and leaves the room.

Left alone, the countess considers her news, for Bertram writes that forced to marry against his will, he refuses to live with his wife, and has run away. Indignant at such conduct, the mother calls him a 'rash and unbridled boy, to fly the favours of so good a king,' and adds he is shaming a maid too virtuous to be scorned by an emperor.

It is at this moment the clown announces the arrival of his young lady, escorted by two gentlemen who bring terrible tidings. When the countess tremulously inquires what he means, he comforts her with the assurance that war is not the most dangerous occupation! Just then Helena and her companions enter, and, after greeting them, the countess, without heeding a despairing cry from Helena, asks about her son? The gentlemen explain that Bertram has gone to Florence to offer his services to the duke, and then Helena tenders the letter they brought her, wherein this youth baldly states that, until she secure possession of his ancestral ring, and can boast she is mother of his child, he will never behold her! Learning this cruel ultimatum was entrusted to these gentlemen,

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the countess informs them she will have nothing further to do with her recreant son, but will adopt Helena as her child in his stead. This gives Helena sufficient courage to finish perusing her letter, which contains the additional statement that, until Bertram learns he is wifeless, he will never return home.

Such a decision increases the wrath of the countess, who vows her daughter-in-law deserves 'a lord that twenty such rude boys might tend upon.' But when she learns how Bertram has gone to Italy with Parolles, she realises her boy's 'well-derived nature' is being corrupted by a 'man full of wickedness.' She, therefore, enjoins upon the gentlemen,—who are on their way to Florence,—to tell Bertram 'his sword can never win the honour that he loses,' and to convey a letter she will write. Promising obedience, the gentlemen follow her out of the room, while Helena, left alone on the stage, muses on Bertram's cruel ultimatum, and decides he shall soon have no wife in France, since she means to run away, in hopes that when rumours of her flight reach him, he will return and cease exposing his 'tender limbs' to 'the event of non-sparing war!' Then she leaves the stage, exclaiming that, as soon as night falls, she will steal away like a thief.

We now behold the palace in Florence, where the duke is appointing Bertram his general of horse, a charge the youth modestly deems beyond his capacity, although his superior encourages him to assume and perform it with valour.

Returning to the castle in Rousillon, we next per-

ceive the countess interviewing her steward, who has just delivered a letter from Helena. The mistress reproves him for accepting such an errand, stating he might have known the missive would never have been entrusted to him unless his young lady was about to depart. On reading the letter aloud, the steward discovers that Helena has gone on a pilgrimage to St. Jacques, and wishes her husband informed that she is no longer in France, so he may return home without breaking his vow. Meantime, she fervently hopes death may overtake her during this journey, and thus set Bertram definitely free. Had the countess known Helena's intentions sooner, she would have defeated them, for she vows her unworthy son will never thrive, unless his wife's prayers divert Heaven's wrath from him. Then she bids the steward write to Bertram all that has occurred, hoping he will return, and that Helena, urged by love, will come back, for, 'which of them both is dearest' to her she cannot tell. Finally, oppressed by all the sorrows assailing her at once, she leaves the stage crying, 'grief would have tears, and sorrow bids me speak.'

The next scene is played outside the walls of Florence, where a number of people have assembled to witness the return of the troops, it having been rumoured that Bertram has distinguished himself in the late encounter. Chief among the spectators is a widow lady, with her daughter and neighbours, and the latter rally the young woman upon having made a conquest of the French nobleman. This damsel, whose name is Diana, doesn't deny the

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fact, but good-naturedly receives her neighbours' warning that men are deceivers, and that many dangers beset maidens. While all stand talking, Helena joins them in the guise of a pilgrim, and the widow, who entertains such travellers, eagerly offers her lodgings.

While they are talking, a military march resounds, and the widow informs Helena that if she will wait a few moments, she can witness the triumphal return of one of her countrymen, who has 'done worthy service.' On hearing this hero is the Count of Rousillon, Helena claims to have already heard his praises, and listens eagerly while Diana relates how the youth stole away from France, having been married, contrary to his will, to a lady of whom his companion, Parolles, speaks most disparagingly. At mention of this name, Helena exclaims she can credit Parolles had nothing good to say of her, a remark Diana does not heed, for she avers it must be hard to be wife to a lord who detests you, while her proud mother plainly intimates her child experienced no difficulty to win that young nobleman's affections! Then, perceiving Helena's interest, the widow relates how Bertram has been courting Diana for some time past, adding that naught save honesty prevented her listening to his suit. Just then the troops file past, and the widow points out Bertram, while Diana, designating Parolles, vows, were she Bertram's wife, she would poison that rascal for leading his master astray. The troops having passed, the widow offers to guide the pilgrim to her house, an invitation Helena accepts,

bidding all present to supper, and promising to bestow some good advice upon Diana.

We now behold the camp before Florence, where Bertram, talking to his mother's messengers, is told he is greatly mistaken in his estimate of Parolles, whom the lords sweepingly designate as 'a most notable coward, an infinite and endless liar, an hourly promise-breaker, the owner of no one good quality worthy your lordship's entertainment.' In proof of the truth of this estimate, they propose Parolles be challenged to recover a lost drum, in regard to which he has been making a great fuss. As Bertram consents to this test, Parolles no sooner enters than a lively and amusing dialogue ensues, during which the lords and Bertram play upon Parolles' vanity, until the boaster finally sallies forth upon his venture. Meanwhile his companions aver he will take no steps for the recovery of the drum, but will return with some astounding tale, and form a plot to expose him.

One of the lords departing, Bertram volunteers to conduct the other to the widow's house and show him the beautiful lass of whom he has spoken so enthusiastically. Still, he admits she met his advances coldly, although Parolles had assured him she was ready to accept his proposals.

We are now transferred to the widow's house, where Helena, after an interview with her hostess, exclaims she must be convinced by this time of her identity. When the widow demurs that she will risk her reputation, Helena reiterates she is the count's lawful wife, and that, if her hostess will

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only aid her, she will not only give her a purse of gold, but will promise a greater reward later on. Helena's plan is that, since the count has been wooing the widow's daughter, Diana should pretend to yield to his suit and make an appointment with him, provided he give her as pledge his ring. This jewel, Diana is to deliver to Helena, remaining chastely absent while Bertram's wife receives him in her stead; earning in return for such services a sum of money sufficient to enable her to contract an honourable marriage.

Enticed by such a bribe, the widow yields, and it is arranged that meeting shall take place that very night, Helena assuring her hostess that, if their plot succeed, it will be 'wicked meaning in a lawful deed, and lawful meaning in a lawful act, where both not sin, and yet a sinful fact.'

ACT IV. The fourth act opens in the Florentine camp, where some practical jokers are lying in ambush to capture Parolles on his way back from his supposed enterprise, and make him think he has been taken by the foe. The men are instructed to use varieties of gibberish to gull Parolles, who is welcome game to them all. A few minutes later the boaster draws near, muttering he has lain low for three hours past, and can now return with a plausible tale to account for the lack of the drum. Talking to himself, he wonders whether it would be better to slash his garments and break his sword as colour to his tale, while the plotters comment on what he says. Suddenly, the men in ambush crowd around him, vociferating meaningless words,

which are supposed to represent foreign languages. Seized and blindfolded, Parolles cries that, if they will only take him where he can speak, he will 'discover that which shall undo the Florentine.' The whole scene proves most comical, owing to the gusto with which the soldiers play their part and, as Parolles leaves the stage under guard, one of the officers sends word to the Count of Rousillon that they have 'caught the woodcock,' and will keep him until his arrival.

The curtain rises once more on the widow's house, where Bertram is interviewing Diana, upon whom he lavishes compliments to entice her to consent to his wishes. Pretending reluctance, Diana gradually yields to her suitor's entreaties, stipulating, however, that he give her the ring he wears. When Bertram objects to part with such an heirloom, Diana pertly vows her chastity is equally precious, and makes it so apparent she will consent only if he yields to her request, that he bestows the ring upon her. Then she directs him to knock at her chamber window at midnight, so softly her mother shall not hear, promising to admit him, provided he does not speak and remains with her but an hour. During that interview in the dark, she proposes to give him a ring as pledge of their secret troth, and of the explanation she promises him later on. Delighted with his success, Bertram departs, while Diana concludes her mother is a wise woman, since she told her exactly what Bertram would say, by what steps he would proceed, and how fervently he would promise marriage as soon as his wife was

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dead. The curtain falls just as she sagely decides it is no sin 'to cozen him that would unjustly win.'

In the Florentine camp, we now overhear the lords who have brought the countess' letter, openly blaming Bertram for having shaken off a good wife. They add that the king is sorely displeased with him, and that rumours are afloat in camp he has perverted a Florentine lady upon whom he bestowed his ancestral ring. By their talk we further learn that peace will speedily be concluded, and that the Count of Rousillon's occupations being over, he will soon leave Florence for home. They add his wife left Rousillon two months before, and that her pilgrimage to St. Jacques has proved fatal, as a report claims she died by the way. At this point a messenger joins them, stating Bertram has already taken leave of the duke, who graciously 'offered him letters of commendations to the king,' which will restore him to favour.

A moment later Bertram appears, commenting upon the fact that he is winding up his affairs, and has already written to his mother to announce his return. All that now remains for him to do is to see that Parolles convicts himself, and to keep his love-tryst. He, therefore, orders Parolles taken out of the stocks,—in which he has languished all night,—and brought blindfolded before him as before a court-martial.

Before long the prisoner is ushered in, volubly offering to reveal everything, provided he is let go. Throughout this scene the soldiers use gibberish, and

when his interrogatory begins, Parolles eagerly reveals the exact number of the Florentine forces, and answers every question asked. He even offers to prove his statements by letters on his person. As the first they open and read is his warning to Diana in regard to Bertram, he jauntily proceeds to betray his master's private affairs, terming him contemptuously 'a foolish, idle boy.' After wringing from Parolles all the information they desire, and frightening him with dire threats of immediate execution, the soldiers unbind him, and remove his bandage. Then only the wretch discovers he is in the midst of his own people, in whose presence he has uttered all these mingled truths and lies.

With a glance of withering scorn for his treachery, Bertram leaves him, an example soon followed by the rest, and Parolles, perceiving all chance of favour and advancement gone, decides to thrive hereafter by villainy only, and not mind his shame.

Returning to the widow's house, we find Helena telling her hostess and daughter that, although she is supposed to be dead, and her husband has preceded her on his way home, she will have to hasten to Marseilles with them to secure the king's aid. The widow, who admires Helena, vows she 'never had a servant to whose trust her business was more welcome,' and expresses fervent thanks when Helena hopes her daughter may secure a good husband, thanks to the dowry she has earned. It is evident Diana does not mind the obloquy under which she rests, for she and her mother gladly accompany

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Helena, who exclaims: 'All's well that ends well,' adding, 'whate'er the course, the end is the renown.'

The curtain next rises on the castle of Rousillon, where the countess is learning from Lafeu how her son was led astray by a worthless fellow named Parolles, and how, had it not been for this, Helena might be still alive and Bertram in full enjoyment of royal favour. The countess wishes her son had never known so bad an adviser, and entertains Lafeu and her clown with praises of the dead Helena. Dismissing the clown, whose witty remarks call forth a tip from Lafeu, and whom the countess excuses by saying her husband made so much of this jester that he considers it 'a patent for his sauciness,' the former conversation is resumed. Lafeu reports he is about to return to court, where he hopes to make Bertram's peace with the king, and arrange for his marriage with his daughter, for he has heard the youth is arriving from Marseilles with a suite of twenty men. On learning her son will be with her soon, the countess expresses delight, just as the glad tidings are confirmed by the clown's announcement that his master is coming, wearing a bandage across his face, which, Lafeu explains, covers a wound honourably received.

ACT V. The fifth act opens in Marseilles, where Helena, the widow, and Diana, have arrived, weary with posting night and day. In spite of her own fatigue, Helena greatly pities her companions, just as a gentleman joins them, whom she remembers having seen at court. To this emissary she eagerly en-

trusts a petition, and is dismayed to learn the king has already left Marseilles. Still, comforting herself with her favourite maxim, 'all's well that ends well,' she inquires whither he is bound, and, learning he is to spend the night at Rousillon, bids the gentleman hurry on with her petition, leaving her to follow as fast as possible, so as to receive the king's answer in person.

We now behold a square before the castle of Rousillon, where the clown and Parolles meet. On this occasion, Parolles,—who brings a letter for Lafeu,—is so muddy and poverty-stricken in appearance, that the clown orders him to stand at a respectful distance, as he cannot endure filth too close by. When Lafeu appears, the clown vanishes, and Parolles humbly presents himself as 'a man whom Fortune hath cruelly scratched.' Deeming he richly deserves such treatment at her hands, Lafeu feels no pity, but taunts Parolles with the matter of the drum, ere he bids him begone. Then, hearing a trumpet announce the arrival of the king, he suddenly relents and sends Parolles to the kitchen for something to eat, a small favour the villain thankfully receives.

Next, the king is seen approaching, speaking to the countess, and assuring her his court lost a jewel in Helena, and that her son must be mad since he 'lack'd the sense to know her estimation home!' Excusing Bertram under plea his shortcomings were due to 'the blaze of youth,' the countess pleads for his pardon, while Lafeu reminds the king that Bertram wronged himself most by losing a wife of

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such perfection. The king graciously expressing his forgiveness and desire to see Bertram, a gentleman hurries off to get him.

Meantime the monarch asks Lafeu whether rumour is correct when it states this youth is about to marry his daughter? Learning such a plan has been mooted, the king consents to the match, because the letters he has recently received speak so highly of Bertram. Just then, the youth in question humbly presents himself, and, when the monarch addresses him as a sun which has been obscured for a time by clouds, he dutifully begs the royal pardon. After granting it, the monarch inquires whether Bertram remembers Lafeu's daughter, and hearing him enthusiastically praise her beauty, promises to forget the past, provided he immediately marry this young person.

The countess expresses a fervent hope her son's second marriage will be more blessed than the first, and Lafeu welcomes his new son-in-law, who gives him a ring for his daughter, upon which the nobleman stares in amazement, because he saw it on Helena's hand, when he took leave from her at court. As this is the ring Bertram received at Florence, during his midnight interview, he swears Helena never owned it. Hearing this, the king demands sight of the jewel, and recognises it as the one he bestowed upon Helena, in case 'her fortunes ever stood necessitated to help,' when, at sight of the token, he would grant any favour she asked. Unable to believe Helena would part with such a treasure, he does not credit Bertram's assertion that the ring was never in

her hands, especially as both the countess and Lafeu swear they saw her wear it.

To account for his ownership of the ring, Bertram claims it was tossed to him from a casement in Florence by a noble lady, whom he could not marry, being already bound. Deeming this mere evasion, the king repeats he gave the ring to Helena, and that Bertram can have obtained it only by rough means, or as love token. When Bertram reiterates that Helena never saw it, the king decrees the matter be sifted to the bottom, and, knowing how Bertram hated his wife, orders him arrested until the affair is cleared up. But, as the guards lead the youth away, he angrily cries they can just as easily prove the ring was Helena's as that he lived with her in Florence, where she never was!

At this juncture a gentleman delivers a petition sent by a Florentine lady, who vows it concerns the king as well as herself. On reading the petition, the king learns that Diana claims the Count of Rousillon as her husband,—now he is a widower,—he having promised her marriage in Florence. Indignantly refusing to accept such a trifle as son-in-law, Lafeu is told by the king he must have won Heaven's favour, since this discovery occurred before the marriage with his daughter took place. Then, his majesty orders Bertram brought again before him, crying he fears foul play in regard to Helena.

Once more ushered in, Bertram is undergoing reproof at the king's hands, when the widow and Diana appear. When the king inquires who these strangers may be, Diana states she is the lady whose

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petition he holds, her mother adding they have come here to have their wrongs righted. Confronted with the ladies, Bertram does not deny knowing them, but glances so coldly upon Diana that she reproaches him for looking thus at his wife. When Bertram denies being her husband, Diana claims he promised to marry her, while Lafeu mutters his reputation is far too smirched to aspire to his daughter. Wishing to extricate himself from an awkward predicament, Bertram pronounces Diana 'a fond and desperate creature that some time I have laugh'd with,' until she exhibits his ring, asking whether a family treasure would have been bestowed upon her in that case? Besides, the countess, recognising the jewel and perceiving the blush which rises to her son's cheek, declares the lady must have some claim upon him. When the king asks whether any one knows Diana, she calls for Parolles, who is immediately summoned; but hearing this man is to testify, Bertram protests he is 'a most perfidious slave' who will say anything they wish, until silenced by a royal reminder that the lady holds his ring.

Seeing no other way out of the dilemma, Bertram now confesses Diana angled for him, and by cunning methods obtained possession of his ring. Rejoining that a man who rejected so noble a first wife must be patiently dealt with, Diana offers to release Bertram, provided he will return her own token. When he says it has passed out of his keeping, the king questions him, until he discovers that the very ring supposed to have been thrown out of a window is the

one bestowed upon him in the midnight interview! The monarch is chiding Bertram for duplicity, when Parolles is shown in, and testifies that his master has tricks 'which gentlemen have.' But, when the king inquires whether Bertram loved Diana, Parolles states he did and did not, admitting that he served as go-between, and was aware of their midnight tryst.

Satisfied in regard to this point, the king asks how Diana obtained the ring she bestowed upon her lover, and learns it was neither lent nor found, although she was not present at the love tryst! Because she refuses to add anything further, the king bids her to speak or die within an hour, and orders her removed from the scene. Driven thus to bay, Diana offers bail, declaring she has accused Bertram 'because he is guilty and he is not guilty,' and reiterating that her reputation has been smirched, although she can swear she is a maid. Because such contradictory statements are received with incredulity, Diana urges her mother to produce her bail, imploring his majesty to postpone judgment until he hears the jeweller who owns the ring. Meantime, she insists that Bertram's conscience should trouble him, and adds a pertinent statement, just as the widow ushers in Helena, whom the king immediately recognises, although she claims to be only the 'shadow of a wife.'

At the same moment, recognising his wronged spouse, Bertram humbly begs her pardon, while Helena tells him, 'When I was like this maid, I found you wondrous kind.' She then produces his

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letter stating under what conditions he will acknowledge her, and claims they have all been fulfilled, thanks to Diana's aid. Still half incredulous, yet greatly relieved, Bertram promises to love Helena dearly, provided all is made clear, while she rejoins that unless he is satisfied, she hopes 'deadly divorce' may step between them.

The scene wherein husband and wife are thus brought together, proves so affecting that Lafeu has to borrow a handkerchief from Parolles to staunch his tears! Meantime, the king promises to pay Diana's dowry provided she has told the truth, and the play closes with an epilogue, stating the dowry had to be paid, and calling for the public's applause.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

ACT I. The first act opens in Vienna, in the palace, just as the duke is informing his worthy counsellor, Escalus, that, trusting in his wisdom, he appoints him chief adviser of the man who will represent him during his absence. Then, after sending for this individual, he asks Escalus' opinion of his choice? The counsellor gravely rejoins that, if any man in Vienna 'be of worth to undergo such ample grace and honour, it is Lord Angelo,' who just then appears.

After praising Angelo for his modest, virtuous character, the duke bids him take charge of the government during his absence, altering and amending the laws as he sees fit. Although Angelo demurs that a test of his merit should be made before entrusting him with such responsibility, the duke names him his substitute, and gives him Escalus as adviser. Then, refusing Angelo's escort, the duke departs, confident he is leaving his affairs in good hands. After he has gone, Escalus begs to consult with Angelo, who invites him therefore to accompany him home.

When the curtain next rises, we behold a street in Vienna, where Lucio, a gentleman, talking to two companions, wonders whether the duke will succeed in making peace with Hungary? Their

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sprightly conversation touches upon sundry other topics, thus giving the spectators an idea of society in Vienna at that epoch. These three young men are finally interrupted by Mistress Overdone, keeper of a house of ill-fame, with whom all three are acquainted. She seems agitated, and, in answer to their questions, informs them a man has just been arrested who is worth five thousand of them all! This statement rouses their curiosity to such a pitch that she has to explain how Claudio has just been sent to prison by the duke's deputy, who has suddenly revived an old law condemning seducers to death. While there is no doubt of Claudio's guilt, the law not having been enforced for the past nineteen years, no one anticipated it would ever be called into play. Dismayed by these tidings, the three gentlemen hurry away, while the woman hails her servant Pompey, who breathlessly reports she has heard aright,—for Claudio is arrested, with Juliet his victim,—and further pursuit of their nefarious business is prohibited.

It is at this moment that the provost passes, escorting his two prisoners to jail. When Claudio objects to being thus exposed to public view, the provost rejoins he is acting by Lord Angelo's orders, and the young man bitterly realises how 'the demigod Authority makes us pay down for our offence.' A moment later, he is accosted by Lucio and the two gentlemen, who hasten up inquiring why he is in custody? Without trying to gloss over his wrongdoing, Claudio explains how Juliet was betrothed to him, and that, had not her relatives wished to

use her dower money for trading, their marriage could have taken place and the present catastrophe have been averted. Unable to marry immediately, the impatient lovers met secretly, as is betrayed by Juliet's condition. Still, it is plain the new deputy is using his authority to make his power felt, since he has just revived this long disregarded law.

When Lucio suggests that an appeal be made to the duke, Claudio rejoins he has vainly tried to do so, but that the ruler has vanished, leaving no trace. His last hope is that his sister Isabella will intercede in his behalf, so he beseeches Lucio to hasten off to the convent where she is a novice, acquaint her with his peril, and implore her to use her influence with the governor to secure his pardon. Promising to fulfil this request, Lucio hurries off in one direction, while the officers lead away their prisoners in the other.

We next behold a monastery outside of Vienna, where the duke assures Friar Thomas he is asking for shelter and disguise, merely so as to circulate through the streets of Vienna unrecognised, and ascertain how his substitute is executing the laws. The duke sadly adds he is to blame for many of the disorders, because he feared, by enforcing certain laws, to forfeit the love of his people. Nevertheless, seeing crime flourish, he realises it is imperative to check it, and bring the people back to virtuous ways. He has, therefore, appointed Angelo, a man of merit, as his substitute, but wishes to make sure he is all he seems, and that the exercise of power will not change his character.

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The next scene is played in the nunnery, where Isabella, talking to a sister, inquires what privileges are granted to nuns? The answers she receives cause her to exclaim conventual restraint is not nearly so severe as she anticipated, just as a man's voice is heard without clamouring for admittance. Bidding Isabella take the key and open the door (because she, as a professed nun, cannot speak to a man), the sister withdraws, leaving the young novice to open. Isabella thus finds herself face to face with Lucio, who breathlessly inquires for 'the fair sister to her unhappy brother, Claudio.' These words so startle Isabella that she asks why Claudio is unhappy, ere she thinks of saying she is the person he seeks. When Lucio states her brother is in prison for seduction, Isabella fancies at first he is mocking her, but when the messenger reiterates this statement, naming the lady in trouble, Isabella cries her brother should atone for his crime by marrying Juliet immediately. Then Lucio explains how the duke's substitute proposes to enforce a long disregarded law by making an example of Claudio, and that the only way to save him is to try and soften Angelo's heart by her entreaties. Frightened by the imminent danger of her beloved brother, Isabella promises to do all she can in his behalf, sending word to Claudio that she will let him know how she speeds, and delaying only long enough to inform the Superior of her intentions.

ACT II. The second act opens in Angelo's house, where he and the counsellor sit in state rendering justice, and where Angelo virtuously states 'we must

not make a scarecrow of the law, setting it up to fear the birds of prey, and let it keep one shape, till custom make it their perch and not their terror. The counsellor, knowing he is referring to Claudio's case, nevertheless pleads in behalf of the youth, whose family he knows. When he ventures to remind the governor that, exposed to similar temptations, they might have fallen in the same way, Angelo sanctimoniously rejoins, 'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus, another thing to fall.' Then, determined the law shall be executed to the letter, he reiterates Claudio must die, and, calling for the provost, bids him provide the culprit with a confessor to prepare for 'the utmost of his pilgrimage,' and see that the execution take place at nine o'clock on the morrow. The provost having departed to carry out these orders, the counsellor hopes Heaven will forgive the governor and them all, as it seems a pity a youth should be condemned for one fault only, since 'some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall.'

It is at this juncture a constable ushers in Pompey and another youth, whom he reports having arrested as 'notorious benefactors,' for he constantly misuses words in this way. His report in regard to the prisoners proves so long-winded that Angelo goes away, bidding Escalus try the case and whip the offenders if guilty. The counsellor, therefore, continues the examination, and, being inclined to leniency, dismisses both hardened and punning sinners with a reprimand, warning them they will be liable to all the severity of the law should they relapse into evil ways.

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The accused dismissed, Escalus interviews the constable, and, finding he has held office many years in succession, bids him select a substitute. Then, inviting the judge to dinner, Escalus leaves, still shaking his head over Claudio's sentence, although he knows severity is needful, for 'mercy is not itself, that oft looks so; pardon is still the nurse of second woe.'

In another room of the same house, a servant informs the provost that Angelo is trying a case, but will soon appear. This man having gone, the provost expresses a hope Angelo may relent, just as his superior enters the apartment. When he diffidently inquires whether Claudio must die, remarking that judges have repented of sentences when too late, he discovers repentance is far from the heart of Angelo, who sternly orders him to do his office or relinquish his place! Not daring offer further objections, the provost humbly inquires what he is to do with Juliet, whose time of trial is drawing near? After giving the necessary directions in regard to her custody, Angelo is informed by a servant the sister of the condemned man begs for an audience. Surprised to think Claudio has a sister (whom the provost describes as a virtuous lady shortly to be admitted into a sisterhood), Angelo orders his visitor admitted, and repeats his orders in regard to the culprits.

The opening door now admits Isabella and Lucio, just as Angelo bids the provost assist at this interview. In touching terms Isabella declares that, although she abhors one vice above all the rest, she

must plead for its forgiveness, seeing it is her brother who is condemned to die. She, therefore, beseeches the governor to punish the fault, yet let the culprit live, her plea being supported by muttered encouragements from the provost. But when Angelo sternly rejoins that a fault cannot be condemned without the doer, poor Isabella, deeming her prayers vain, recognises it is a just but severe law, and sighs she *had* a brother.

She is about to turn away in despair, when Lucio softly admonishes her not to give up, but kneel and implore, exclaiming that if she needed a pin she could not 'with more tame a tongue desire it.' Thus encouraged, Isabella again inquires whether her brother must really die. and entreats the judge to make use of his unlimited authority to pardon Claudio. Although admitting he could do so, Angelo insists sentence has been pronounced, and that it is too late to recall it. Still urged by Lucio, Isabella pleads eloquently in favour of mercy, saying, 'not the king's crown, nor the deputed sword, the marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe, become them with one-half so good a grace as mercy does.' She also sadly reminds the governor that if her brother 'had been as you and you as he, you would have slipt like him; but he, like you, would not have been so stern.'

Although Angelo turns his back upon her, Isabella continues to entreat, her prayers being prompted by Lucio, who softly urges her to keep them up. She, therefore, does so, even after Angelo repeats her brother 'is a forfeit of the law,' and that her

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words are wasted. When he baldly states Claudio shall die on the morrow, Isabella wails her brother is not prepared for death, adding that, even 'for our kitchens we kill the fowl of season: shall we serve heaven with less respect than we do minister to our gross selves?' Then she urges that Claudio be at least granted time to repent, gently reminding Angelo that, although many have been guilty of similar offences, none have died for it heretofore. Although this argument seems pertinent to Lucio, Angelo rejoins 'the law hath not been dead, though it hath slept,' and that, had it only been rigidly enforced from the beginning, no such disorders would have ensued as prevail at present in Vienna.

Implored in spite of this logic to show mercy, Angelo insists he can best do so by enforcing justice, and reiterates Claudio must die, although Isabella reminds him he is the first to pronounce so cruel a sentence, and her brother the first to feel its weight. Egged on by secret signs from Lucio and the provost, Isabella urges that a man in authority should make use of that power mercifully, that gods never waste their thunders on small offences, and that it is only the man 'drest in a little brief authority' who inclines to undue severity. Both Lucio and the provost subscribe to this, and, as they covertly sign to her to keep it up, she begs the governor to exercise Christian charity, remembering it is not right to 'weigh our brother with ourself,' and imploring him to look down in his own heart, and see whether he has always been free from sin? By this time, her beauty and emotion have produced so vivid

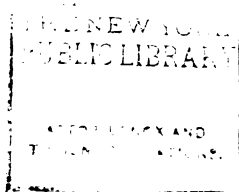


ISABELLA REJECTS ANGELO'S PROPOSAL

A. Spiess

Ang. "Fit thy consent to my sharp appetite ;
Lay by all nicety and prolixious blushes,"

Measure for Measure. Act 2, Scene 4.



an impression upon Angelo that he has fallen in love with her, but he yields to his passion only enough to bid her call again on the morrow, when he may have a different answer to give her. Delighted with this slight concession, Isabella rapturously cries she will 'bribe' him, and, when Angelo indignantly inquires how, declares not with gold or precious stones, but with fervent prayers in his behalf.

Then, overjoyed at having obtained a reprieve, Isabella retires with Lucio, while Angelo acknowledges 'I am that way going to temptation, where prayers cross.' Left alone, he next marvels that a man, who has never felt the attraction of women before, should succumb now, and wonders whether 'modesty may more betray our sense than woman's lightness?' He realises, however, that he has granted Isabella a second interview merely for the pleasure of seeing once more the spotless maiden, who has made a deeper impression upon his heart than he ever felt before.

We next behold the prison, in which the duke enters, disguised as a friar, and telling the provost he has come to visit the prisoners. So as to minister intelligently to their needs, he inquires the nature of their offences; and, seeing Juliet pass, the provost points her out as one of the victims of the recently enforced seduction law. On learning a young man is to die on the morrow on this charge, the friar questions Juliet, only to discover that, loving and truly beloved, she feels no remorse for her sin, but is ready 'to take her shame with joy.'

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After dismissing her with his blessing, the friar visits the prisoner who is to die on her account, while Juliet bewails her lover's fate as the provost leads her off the scene.

We are now transferred to a room in Angelo's house, where he is debating whether to yield to Isabella's solicitations, for the temptation which assails him prevents his seeking aid in prayer as usual. It is while he is soliloquising on this subject that a servant announces the arrival of Isabella, whom Angelo eagerly orders admitted alone. When the man has gone, he wonders why his blood rushes so madly to his head, and why his feelings are in such a turmoil? Next Isabella enters, humbly inquiring what he has decided, and Angelo repeats her brother cannot live; then, seeing she pretends to misunderstand him, he baldly states Claudio must die under his sentence. When the sister pleads for time for preparation, Angelo sternly refuses further reprieve, holding forth virtuously against the heinous sin which Claudio has committed. Hearing Isabella timidly rejoin it is not considered as unpardonable a crime on earth as in heaven, the governor sternly demands whether she would be willing to rescue her brother at the cost of her chastity? Then, as she exclaims nothing would induce her so to risk her soul, he artfully hints there might be charity in such a sin, a suggestion she does not understand.

After wringing from her an agonised admission that she would sacrifice anything to save her brother, Angelo plainly informs her he will pardon Claudio,

provided she grant a sinful favour. Thinking he is testing her virtue, Isabella, at first, shows only surprise, but when he assures her such is not the case, she indignantly threatens to denounce him, unless he sign her brother's pardon immediately. Angelo, who, this time, has shrewdly provided for an interview without witnesses, haughtily assures her she is at his mercy, as no one would believe her word against his. Then he cruelly adds that unless she yield, her brother shall 'die the death,' giving her only twenty-four hours wherein to decide. Watching him disappear after pronouncing this ultimatum, Isabella wildly wrings her hands, wondering where she can find aid and redress, for she is torn both ways, and suffers agony for the sake of the brother whom, nevertheless, she *cannot* rescue at the cost of her virtue.

ACT III. We now return to the prison, where the disguised duke is talking with Claudio, who has confided to him he still hopes for pardon. The friar advises him, however, to prepare for death, so Claudio, deeming his interlocutor the holy man he seems, bespeaks his aid. With due humility he listens to the sermon the duke preaches on the worthlessness of life and the necessity of repentance—an eloquent speech for which Claudio has barely expressed thanks,—when his sister demands admittance. It is while stepping out to make room for the newcomer, that the friar whispers to the provost to place him where he can see and hear this interview unnoticed.

Meantime, brother and sister forget him, Claudio

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being eager to learn what comfort Isabella brings. When she gravely tells him, 'Lord Angelo, having affairs to heaven, intends you for his swift ambassador,' he understands hope is vain. To his despairing inquiry whether no remedy can be found, Isabella refuses an answer, until she has ascertained he is brave enough to die should things come to the worst. It is only when duly assured of his physical courage, that she dares impart Angelo's alternative, which Claudio cannot credit, such is the governor's reputation for virtue. When convinced, however, his first impulse is to vow she shall not make such a sacrifice for his sake, but soon after the fear of death seizes him so sorely that he begins to argue that a sin committed for another's sake is less heinous than one indulged in for self-gratification. Finally, confessing he is afraid to die and go, 'we know not where,' he beseeches Isabella to save him at any cost. Although his description of what might befall his disembodied spirit is so ghastly that she shudders, Isabella maintains nothing could excuse wrongdoing on her part, and chides Claudio for asking her to forfeit her soul for his sake. In her righteous indignation, she bids him die if necessary, promising to pray for him dead, but refusing sin for him living. Then, as he continues to plead, she concludes he is a man hardened to sin, to whom mercy would prove injurious, and that hence it is best he should die!

It is at this moment the disguised duke reappears, expressing a desire to confer with Isabella, who steps aside to await his pleasure. Meanwhile, turning to

Claudio, the friar states he has overheard what his sister has said, and feels confident Angelo has merely been testing her virtue. He further assures the prisoner that as no hope of pardon remains, he had better make his peace with heaven as quickly as possible. Thus recalled to better sentiments, Claudio humbly begs his sister's pardon, and promises to leave life without regret. Next the provost leads him away, leaving the friar, as requested, alone with the grieving sister.

Addressing Isabella, the holy man gravely states 'the hand that made you fair, made you good,' and adds he would wonder at Angelo's proposals, were he not aware that 'frailty hath examples for his falling.' When he asks what steps she means to take to save her brother, Isabella sadly replies she will tell Angelo it is better Claudio should die by law, than her son 'be unlawfully born,' adding that, as soon as the duke returns, she will reveal to him how sorely he was mistaken in his choice. While approving of this decision, the friar rejoins that if Isabella will follow his advice, meantime, she can right a wronged lady, redeem her brother from death while remaining stainless, and please the absent duke. Such a proposal amazes Isabella, who declares she has 'spirit to do anything that appears not foul.' Hearing this, the friar asks whether she ever heard of Mariana, a lady so solemnly betrothed to Angelo six years ago that the contract was equivalent to a marriage? He adds that, having lost brother and dower in a shipwreck shortly before the nuptial ceremony, this lady was repudiated by An-

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gelo, under pretext he had discovered matters reflecting upon her honour. When the friar adds that she still mourns the loss of her lover, and that Isabella can, if she chose, bring Mariana and her plighted husband together once more, the maiden gladly volunteers her services, provided he will point out what she is to do. Thereupon the holy man bids Isabella accept Angelo's proposals, and appoint a midnight tryst, which Mariana will keep in her stead, an action he deems no sin, since they are formally plighted. Meantime, he proposes to betake himself to the 'moated grange,' where this 'dejected Mariana' dwells, so as to prepare her to play her part in deceiving Angelo.

While Isabella hastens away comforted, the friar, in the street before the prison, encounters the constable with Pompey, whom the counsellor recently pardoned, but who has again infringed the law. After questioning culprit and official, the friar discovers this man is an inveterate sinner and punster, just as Lucio joins them, inquiring why Pompey is under arrest? A frequenter of the house where Pompey serves, Lucio indulges in doubtful jokes with him, ere he is taken away. Then, under pretext of giving the news, Lucio informs the friar that the duke has been reported in various places, and that Angelo is ruling wisely in his absence, although a little more lenity might become his office.

In reply to this statement, the friar explains Angelo is fighting against a vice so prevalent that only severity can cure it. But when Lucio remarks the governor is not made of the same stuff as other

men, and that even the duke was not impeccable, the friar coldly contradicts him. Pretending to know many doubtful things about his master, Lucio continues his tales, protesting meanwhile he loves the duke dearly, and knows what he is talking about. Threatening to report these calumnies, the friar, after answering a few questions in regard to Claudio, watches Lucio out of sight, and then comments there is 'no might nor greatness in mortality can censure 'scape; black wounding calumny the whitest virtue strikes,' for he is conscious of being innocent of the crimes of which he has been so jauntily accused.

While the friar is thus soliloquising, the counsellor appears with the provost and officers, to order Mistress Overdone to prison, because, in spite of repeated admonitions, she still infringes the law. When the officers have led the protesting prisoner away, the counsellor sadly informs the provost Claudio will have to die, as Angelo refuses to yield to any intercession. He seems pleased, however, to hear that the friar,—to whom he is introduced,—has visited this poor prisoner, and has given him the benefit of his ministrations. During the ensuing conversation, hearing the friar ask whether the duke was really inclined to pleasure as Lucio hinted, the counsellor warmly testifies in favour of his morality. Then, satisfied that Claudio is in a proper frame of mind to die, he goes off to pay him a last visit, accompanied by the friar's blessing.

Left alone upon the stage, the friar concludes that 'he who the sword of heaven will bear should be as holy as severe,' and that Angelo should be

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trebly ashamed to punish others for sins to which he is secretly inclined. He adds that, applying 'craft against vice,' Angelo shall be tricked this very night into receiving the betrothed he despised, and thus compelled to 'perform an old contracting.'

ACT IV. The fourth act opens in the 'moated grange,' where Mariana is languidly listening to a love-song, which she interrupts as soon as she notices the approach of the 'man of comfort.' When the friar enters, he finds Mariana in a less merry mood than the sounds would imply, so exclaims that 'music oft hath such a charm to make bad good, and good provoke to harm.' Then, he inquires whether any one has asked for him, and, seeing Isabella draw near, begs Mariana to go away for a while, and let him converse privately with the stranger. As soon as Mariana is out of earshot, the friar inquires whether Isabella has successfully performed her part, and learns how Angelo has appointed as trysting-place a garden, for which he has given her the key, bidding her meet him there at midnight. When the friar questions whether she can find her way in the dark, Isabella explains how Angelo twice led her over every turn, how she warned him a servant would accompany her,—for she is supposed to be pleading for a brother's life,—and how, for that reason, their interview would have to be brief. Satisfied with these arrangements, the friar summons Mariana, and, introducing Isabella, bids her listen attentively to this lady's proposals, as they have his full sanction and approval.

The ladies having gone off together, the friar

spends the time of waiting in meditating upon greatness. Before long Isabella returns, triumphantly proclaiming that since he sanctions the plan, Mariana will help them. Then, she reminds her companion not to speak, and only on leaving to whisper softly 'remember now my brother.' Thus schooled, Mariana promises to play her part, the friar again assuring her this act will be sinless, as Angelo is her husband by pre-contract.

We are now transferred to a room in the prison, where the provost offers Pompey pardon, provided he will act as assistant to the executioner, who is summoned to teach the new candidate his duties. The conversation between these men proves lengthy but uninteresting, and, as soon as they leave the stage, Claudio appears and is shown his death-warrant by the provost. Then this official asks for Bernardine, who, instead of repenting, spends all his time drinking, and sends Claudio back to his cell, hoping a reprieve may yet arrive.

Just then a knock is heard at the door, and the provost admits the friar, who seems surprised to learn Isabella has not been seen since curfew. He adds that there are faint hopes of saving Claudio, news the provost eagerly welcomes, before hurrying out to answer a second knock. When he returns, the friar eagerly asks whether this was the reprieve, only to be told no such order has come, to the provost's despair.

It is at this juncture that Angelo's messenger arrives, and delivers a paper with injunctions that its orders be carried out immediately. The friar deems

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this the pardon just purchased by Isabella, until the provost reads it aloud, when he discovers that Bernardine and Claudio are both to be executed, the latter's head being sent to the governor in token the deed is done! The provost seems horrified, but when the friar asks about Bernardine, describes him as a hardened criminal and persistent drinker. After admitting such a man deserves death, the friar suggests Bernardine's head be sent to Angelo instead of Claudio's, a substitution to which the provost consents only after the friar has exhibited a letter, signed and sealed by the duke, which accredits him fully.

In another room in the jail, Pompey is commenting on his past life, when the executioner enters, bidding him prepare to behead Bernardine. This prisoner is then brought in, too drunk to do more than stammer he is not fit for execution, a patent fact, as the friar confirms. Bernardine is, therefore, sent back to his cell, just as the provost announces that a notorious pirate has died in prison, whose hair and beard are of the same colour as Claudio's, and whose head can, therefore, easily be substituted for that of the young man. Concluding this death is providential, the friar orders the pirate's head sent to Angelo, while Claudio and Bernardine are confined in a secret dungeon, where they are to remain until the duke's return.

The provost having gone to carry out these orders, the friar murmurs he will write to Angelo, announcing his master's return home, and bidding him meet the duke outside of the city to escort him home. While he is thus deciding, the provost passes through

the room, with the head he is bearing to Angelo. Just as he goes out, Isabella comes in, and the friar hastily decides to keep her ignorant of his interference, giving her 'heavenly comforts of despair, when it is least expected.' When she, therefore, breathlessly inquires whether the deputy has sent her brother's pardon, she is gravely informed her brother is released from all earthly pain, and his head on its way to Angelo! Incredulous at first, Isabella, overcome with grief, finally raves she will pluck out Angelo's eyes. Thereupon the friar bids her be patient, adding that, if she conforms to his advice, she will be able to seek redress from the duke on the morrow, on the very spot where the counsellor and Angelo are to meet him. In case she follow his instructions he promises revenge and rehabilitation, bidding her, meanwhile, carry a letter to Friar Peter, whom she will find at Mariana's house, ready to assist them both. As Isabella is about to pass out, Lucio enters, assuring her he shares her grief for her beloved brother, and that, had the duke only been in Vienna, Claudio would never have perished.

When Isabella has gone, another short conversation takes place between Lucio and the friar, in the course of which the young man again taxes his master with loose morals, revealing, incidentally, that he himself is guilty of a sin, which the friar duly notes.

We now behold a room in Angelo's house, where he and the counsellor discuss letters recently received from the duke, but which contradict each other. Angelo is amazed that the last missive should summon him to meet his superior outside the town,

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and to proclaim that any one with a grievance against him shall immediately make it known. Although the counsellor suggests the duke takes these measures merely to free them from further responsibility, Angelo,—whose conscience is uneasy,—expresses his doubts in a soliloquy after the counsellor's departure. Still, he comforts himself with the belief that no maid would have the hardihood to confess her shame, and feels safe because he has done away with Isabella's brother, the only person who could have called him to account for dishonouring her.

We next see fields outside of town, where the duke in person delivers letters which Friar Peter is to carry to the provost. After the friar has gone, the duke summons his attendants to escort him to the appointed tryst. Meantime, in a street near the city gate, Isabella and Mariana are preparing, by Friar Peter's directions, to fall at the duke's feet, and denounce Angelo. While Isabella seems doubtful, Mariana, full of confidence in her spiritual adviser, implores her to obey; so Isabella concludes at last to do so, saying philosophically, ' 'tis a physic that's bitter to sweet end.' They are still debating when joined by Friar Peter, who urges them to hasten to the gate, as the trumpets have already twice sounded, and the duke is about to appear.

ACT V. The fifth act opens at the city gate, just as the duke is formally welcomed by Angelo and Escalus, whom, in recognition of their good offices, he places on either side of him, for the remainder of the journey. It is at this moment that Friar

Peter leads Isabella forward, and that, falling at the duke's feet, she loudly calls for justice! With the grave assurance that Lord Angelo, here present, will see it is awarded her, the duke turns to Isabella, who rejoins he bids her 'seek redemption of the devil,' and implores him to grant redress in person. Hearing this, Angelo, with pretended good nature, whispers she is crazy, having vainly entreated him to spare a guilty brother's life. Isabella, however, interrupts this speech, denouncing him as a murderer, and accusing him, besides, of having broken the commandments. Although the duke now compassionately orders Isabella removed, she insists upon a hearing, talking so wildly that he first concludes she is insane, only to reverse this verdict when he discovers her statements are coherent. They are, besides, supported by Lucio, the time-server, who, stepping forward, testifies he urged Isabella to plead with Angelo for her brother's life. Thus the whole story of Angelo's guilt is divulged; but the duke, pretending to disbelieve it, orders Isabella off to prison for slandering so worthy an official as the immaculate Angelo!

Perceiving he can do an ill turn to one he hates on account of his virtue, Lucio, who overheard the friar advise Isabella to claim justice, suggests this is all the fault of a man who spoke in so evil a way of the duke that had it not been for his cloth, he would have chastised him. When Friar Peter exclaims this cannot be true, Lucio insists so vehemently, that the friar says his companion will soon be vindicated and Isabella proved a liar. Meanwhile,

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Isabella is led away, and Mariana advances in her turn to fall at the duke's feet. She remains veiled, however, saying she has vowed not to reveal her countenance until bidden to do so by her husband. In her next breath, however, she admits being neither maid, wife, nor widow, statements so contradictory, that the duke questions her closely, amid many forward interruptions on Lucio's part. Before long he hears Mariana testify that Angelo, while he fancied he was betraying Isabella, consorted with his own wife. At these words, Angelo bids Mariana remove her veil, which she immediately does, expressing great readiness to obey her lawful spouse. Then, with face exposed, she explains how she took Isabella's place, whereupon Angelo remarks that since both women claim he dishonoured them at the same time, the falsity of their accusation is palpable, and that he begs permission to settle the case in person. This favour the duke readily grants, appointing Escalus as his assistant, and ordering that the friar, who advised these two women so unwisely, be summoned to answer for his conduct.

The duke now excuses himself for a while, leaving his deputies to judge this knotty point. After questioning Lucio, who repeats the monk spoke villainously of the duke, the counsellor sends for Isabella, whom he suspects of having been suborned by the wicked friar to make this wanton accusation against Angelo. The provost soon returns, accompanied by his prisoner and the duke, who has, meantime, resumed his friar habit. The trial proceeds, the counsellor experiencing great difficulty in silenc-

ing Lucio, who constantly interjects impudent or scurrilous remarks.

Turning to the friar, the counsellor first inquires whether it is he who egged the women on? Although the friar admits having done so, he asks why the duke is not present, saying he does not approve of leaving the 'trial in the villain's mouth.' Such a statement sounds so disrespectful, that Escalus threatens torture, until the friar tells him that, not being a subject of the duke, he is beyond reach of the law. He adds that his 'business in this state' made him 'a looker-on here in Vienna,' where he has 'seen corruption boil and bubble,' a statement viewed as such slander that the counsellor orders him taken to prison. Then, the forward Lucio boldly exclaims he deserves double punishment for speaking ill of the duke. Although the friar protests it was Lucio, himself, who uttered these calumnies, he is hustled out of the room, his accuser lending a hand so officiously that he jerks off the friar's cowl, thus revealing to all present that the duke has been among them in disguise.

Turning to his subjects, the duke now orders Lucio arrested, forgives the counsellor for his well-meant severity, and bids Angelo clear himself immediately, or suffer the penalty of his wrath. Seeing all is discovered, Angelo exclaims his confession will be his trial, and he will sentence himself to death. Then the duke summons Mariana, and, hearing she was legally betrothed to Angelo, bids friar Peter lead them both away, and celebrate the religious marriage, ere he bring them back to the hall. While

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they are absent, the counsellor expresses surprise, and the duke, turning to Isabella, says she probably wonders why he did not use his authority to save Claudio? He adds that, although he fully intended doing so, 'the swift celerity of his death,' 'brain'd his purpose.' He is just remarking that life, 'past fearing death,' is better than a life of fear here below, when Angelo and Mariana are ushered in, their marriage having meanwhile been completed. Addressing Angelo, the duke decrees that, although he has now righted Mariana, there should be 'measure for measure,' and that, having cruelly sentenced to death a man for the crime he himself committed, he deserves the same penalty.

At these words the new-made bride falls at the duke's feet, pleading for her husband's life, although he coldly informs her it is vain, and says she shall have all Angelo's wealth to enable her to purchase a better spouse. As her prayers prove futile, Mariana calls upon Isabella to aid her, in spite of the fact that the duke reminds her it is rash to ask for the intervention of one Angelo cruelly wronged. Touched by Mariana's sorrow, however, Isabella kneels and pleads for Angelo's life, saying her brother, 'in that he did the thing for which he died,' perished justly, and reminding the duke that, as Angelo's 'act did not o'ertake his bad intent,' his life *can* be spared. Instead of answering the two suppliants, the duke demands how it happened that Claudio was beheaded at an unusual hour, and is informed it was by special order. On account of

this infraction of the law, the provost is relieved of office, whereupon he immediately confesses having been guilty of another illegal act, that of sparing a prisoner's life. When the duke inquires this man's name, the provost replies it is Bernardine, whom he is bidden produce immediately. During his absence, the counsellor, too, intercedes for Angelo, who, however, consumed with shame and remorse, craves 'death more willingly than mercy,' knowing how amply he has deserved it.

It is at this moment the provost ushers in Bernardine, who is followed by two muffled figures. Addressing Bernardine, the duke declares, as the friar pronounced him unfit to die, he has decided to pardon him, in hopes he may repent before leaving this world. Then, the provost brings forward one of the muffled figures, saying he is 'almost as like Claudio as himself.' Bidding Isabella look at him, the duke states that if this youth resembles her brother, he will pardon Angelo. Meantime, Angelo has perceived, with relief, that his wicked intentions have been frustrated, and that the man whom he deemed slain still lives. Such is his relief, and humbled, repentant mood, that when the duke bids him live and love his wife, he gratefully promises to do so. Addressing Lucio, the duke publicly reveals his depravity, decreeing that, for slandering him he shall be whipped, and that, after having made such redress as lies in his power for the crime he committed, he shall be duly hanged. Then, having given Lucio this wholesome scare, the merciful duke remits all punishments,—save atonement for his

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crime,—and Lucio is led away, still punning, for nothing is sacred in his eyes.

Turning to Claudio, the duke gravely bids him indemnify Juliet for all she has suffered, wishes long life and joy to Mariana, congratulates the counsellor upon his blameless conduct, and finally implores Isabella to grant him a hearing, declaring if she is willing to listen to his proposals, 'what's mine is yours, what's yours is mine.' Saying this, he escorts her back to the palace, bidding the rest follow, and promising to reveal 'what's yet behind, that's meet you all should know.'

THE END





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